



The Advent

*Always circumstances come to reveal
the hidden weaknesses that have to be
overcome.*

The Mother

The ADVENT

April, 1947

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It is the lesson of life that always in the world everything fails a man—only the Divine does not fail him, if he turns entirely to the Divine. It is not because there is something bad in you that blows fall on you—blows fall on all human beings because they are full of desire for things that cannot last and they lose them or, even if they get, it brings disappointment and cannot satisfy them. To turn to the Divine is the only truth in life.

21-4-1933

Sri Aurobindo



A Prayer

O Lord, unseizable Reality, Thou who constantly escapest before our conquering advance, even though it is effective, and who wilt always be the Unknown in spite of all that we shall learn to know Thee, in spite of all that we shall have ravished from Thy eternal mystery, we would, with a complete and constant effort, combining the multiple paths which lead towards Thee, advance like a rising and indomitable flood, breaking all obstacles, crossing all barriers, lifting all veils, dispersing all clouds, piercing all darknesses, advance towards Thee, always towards Thee with a movement so powerful, so irresistible, that a whole multitude will be swept on behind us, and the earth conscious of Thy new and eternal Presence will understand at last what are her true ends and live in the harmony and peace of Thy sovereign realisation.

Teach us ever more,
Enlighten us more and more,
Dispel our ignorance,
Illumine our minds,
Transfigure our hearts.

And give us that Love which never fades and make Thy sweet law blossom in every being.

We are Thine to all eternity.

January 9, 1914

The Mother



The **ADVENT**

The Divine gives itself to those who give themselves without reserve and in all their parts to the Divine. For them the calm, the light, the power, the bliss, the freedom, the wideness, the heights of knowledge, the seas of Ananda. - - - Sri Aurobindo.

Communism—What does it mean?

COMMUNISM, in India at least, has come to mean things which it was not the original or the main purpose of the word to imply. Communism meant "holding in common", that is to say, there is no private property, one can claim nothing as exclusively as one's own—things are distributed, work as well as necessities, and one receives them, each in his turn, according to his need and desert, as determined by a general planning. Let alone property, there are types of communism that speak of holding in common women and children even. In any case whatever one is given one possesses and enjoys only for the moment, there is nothing like permanent possession. All have equal right to all things. This is an ideal which I do not think many would care to adopt and follow. In India it appears the word "communism" has been taken in the sense of the regime of the common man. Not that there is any harm in this deviation of the meaning. If it is a convenient label or a battle-cry for the common man's right to exist, to have his just *lebensraum*, well, none can object and all should sympathise and help towards that end. But the mischief is that the common man adopted by communism has a restrictive denotation, it takes in only a section of the common man: it is used mostly, if not exclusively, in connection with wage-earners and that too only of the category of peasants and workmen. A large section of the common man, even of wage-earners in a sense, is left out in the communistic scheme, at least not given the same importance as the other. School teachers, especially primary school teachers, small office-clerks, for example, are not less "common" or less unfortunate or worthy of succour. These form a genuine proletariat: only they have not yet been called upon to take part in the Dictatorship.

Apart from this restrictive denotation, communism, in practice, has been given a restrictive connotation too which is more ominous and unhelpful. The communistic movement has become dynamic in so far as it is a movement for redressing grievances (although the methods employed at times, it is alleged, are not as they should be, worthy of the civilised human being), in other words, it has been more or less negative in its work and outlook. The whole stress has been laid upon two items: (1) less hours of work and (2) more wages—I do not mention better housing, medical aid, pension etc., which are auxiliary items. When workers were considered as no more than slaves under the yoke of the blind and brutal exploiter, these demands had a meaning; but they have lost much of their point in the changed circumstances of today.

Whatever the immediate necessity of such drastic negative procedures, true and abiding social welfare depends upon a deeper and wider planning. The aim should be not merely to look for grievances and deal with them piecemeal, but to create conditions in which such grievances do not arise at all or are reduced to a minimum. For the economic well-being of the society, a just and equitable distribution of wealth is a sound policy, no doubt, but before that one must have wealth and enough of it. The stress should therefore be upon increased production, "grow-more-food". The workers must consider themselves ministers to the Goddess Lakshmi. To bring prosperity to the commonwealth, to discover and marshall the resources, increase the output and thus help to raise the standard of life—that is the true role of loyal workers. But as it is, in the way they behave and act at present, they are consumers more than producers. To concentrate all attention and energy upon solely decreasing the hours of work and increasing the wages can have no other meaning. Leisure, rest, recreation are necessary, but that should not mean laziness, unwillingness to work, dissipation. One should be decently paid for one's labour, one must not be overworked, yes, but one must look to the other side also, one must bear in mind the capacity of the payer and the needs of the others in the society. Necessity is one thing, greed or selfishness is another. The greed to possess all the golden eggs at once sometimes leads to a disastrous procedure.

The farmer proprietor, the bourgeois, the capitalist in a modern society, whatever charges of exploitation may be brought against them, are, each in his own way, precisely centres of production, of wealth increment. They are not merely and not always blood-suckers and heartless profiteers. One need not rob, burn, kill them in a mad rush; they too can be utilised, their services placed at the disposal of the commonwealth. These are names which we may not like because of unhappy associations in the past, but the realities, the types of forces they represent are, many of them, permanent

features of Nature's economy. They come up in other forms and names. They have suppressed bourgeois bureaucracy in Russia, but it has reappeared in what is termed nowadays the managerial system.

Be that as it may. If one demands a fair share of the riches of the commonwealth, one must lend one's hand honestly and whole-heartedly to its production. That is the line of true communism. Above all, one must cultivate the civic sense, the very primary thing one must have for a harmoniously prosperous collective life—we have to learn again the first lessons of civilised living in these days when the brute and the vampire are seated in human hearts. We must not always clamour for selfish gains, gains for oneself, for one's class or community, or even for one's country. We must have a global view of the human society which is a complex and multifoliate organism. Many interests have to be served, many lines of growth have to be encouraged, liberty for contraries, all in the frame of a wide harmony. The ancient Rishis invoked the aid of the gods Mitra and Varuna for the establishment of that wide harmony, the builders of the new age too can do no better.

To be or not to be

A moral problem, *un cas de conscience* (a case of conscience), as they say in French. To defend yourself against your attacker and kill him who comes to kill you or stand disarmed and let yourself be killed—which is better, which has the greater moral value? To fight your enemy is normal, is human. To preserve yourself, that is to say, your body, is the very first injunction of Nature. That is Nature's primary and fundamental demand. And to preserve one's life one has to take other's life. That is also Nature. But then, it is said, man is meant to rise above Nature, live (even if it means to die) according to a higher law—not the biological law, the law of tooth and claw. The higher law is for the preservation of life indeed, but others' life, not one's own, if it comes to that; it is not self-centred, but wholly other-regarding, it is for harmony, for peace and amity, not violence and battle. If one demurs and points out that it requires two to be friends and at peace, the answer is that one side must begin, and the merit goes to him who begins. One need not worry about the other side, which may be left to follow its own law of life, which, however, can be gained over only in this way and not by compulsion or coercion or violence. *Na hi verena verani samantidha kudachana*. Never by enmity is enmity appeased, says the Dhammapada.

This is a way of cutting the Gordian knot. But the problem is not so simple as the moralist would have it. Resist not evil: if it is made an absolute rule, would not the whole world be filled with evil? Evil grows much faster

than good. By not resisting evil one risks to perpetuate the very thing that one fears and deprives the good of its chance to approach or get a foothold. That is why the Divine Teacher declares in the Gita that God comes down upon earth, assuming a human body, to protect the good and slay the wicked, slay not metaphorically, but actually and materially, as he did on the field of the Kurus.

It is a complex problem and the solution too is complex. The Gita—and Hinduism generally—does not posit a universal *dharma*, but a hierarchy of dharmas. Men have different natures; so their duties, their functions and activities, their paths of growth and development must naturally be different. A rigid rule does not fit in with the facts of life, and the more absolute it is, the less efficacy it possesses as a living reality. Therefore in the Indian social scheme, there is one dharma for the Brahmin and another for the Kshatriya (a third for the Vaishya and a fourth for the Sudra).

The Brahmin is he who represents in his nature and character the principle and movement of knowledge, of comprehension and inclusion, of peace and harmony—all the qualities that are termed *sattwic*. A Brahmin does not fight, the very build of his consciousness prevents him from wounding and hurting; he has no enemy, even if he is attacked or killed he does not raise his arm to protect himself (although Ramakrishna would prescribe even for him a modified or mollified mode of resisting the evil, hissing at least if not biting). The Biblical injunction, we know, is to present the other cheek too to the smiter. This is for those who follow the Brahminical discipline. But a Kshatriya, who in his nature and consciousness is a warrior, has another dharma; he is the armed guard of knowledge and truth, he is strength and force. He has to resist the evil in the name of the Lord, he has to raise his arm to strike. He is the instrument of Rudra and Mahakali. Does not the mighty goddess declare—"I draw the bow for Rudra, I hurl the arrow to slay the hater of the truth"? If the Kshatriya does not follow his own dharma, but seeks to imitate the Brahmin, he brings about a confusion, liable to disintegrate the society, he is then un-Aryan, inglorious, unworthy of heaven, deserving all the epithets which Sri Krishna heaped upon the dejected, depressed and confused Arjuna. So long as the world is held by brute force, so long as there is the sway of evil power over the material earth and the physical body, there will be the need to resist it physically: if I do not do it, other instruments will be found. I may say like Arjuna, overwhelmed with pity and grief, "I shall not fight", but God and the cosmic deities may refuse my refusal and compel me to do what in my ignorance and wrong-headedness I would not like to do.

Here lies the secret and the solution of the problem. It is indeed the solution given for all ages by the Gita. There will always be a problem, a difficult decision to make—a division in the consciousness—so long as one

is in the realm of dualities, in one's mental being and consciousness, ruled by relativities and contingencies. There one cannot but have a divided loyalty. A part of you, for example, is loyal to your family, another to your country, a third to yourself or to some ideal which you have set up. And naturally man feels confused in the midst of their conflicting claims and is at a loss to choose. Therefore the Gita says, the highest law, the supreme code of conduct is the Divine Will. And the only work and labour for man is to discover and identify oneself with this Divine Will. "Abandon all other standards of conduct, take refuge in Me alone." That is the supreme secret of human life—as well as of the Life Divine.

To know the divine will and to be one with it is not easy, to be sure. But that is the only radical solution. That has got to be done, if one is to come out of the chaos he is in.

Once in this status of the divine consciousness, one passes beyond the three Gunas. That is to say, one bids good-bye to one's (the human sense of) freedom and option of choice. One can say no longer, I cannot do it, for it seems immoral, I have to do that, because that seems good. One goes beyond good and bad and awaits the divine command. One does what one is ordered to do from above, what is needed to fulfil the Cosmic Purpose. You do not act then, it is the Divine who acts in you.

It may be asked if even then there are not some types of activity and impulsion that are intrinsically evil, undivine—they can under no circumstances be godly or God's instruments, they have to be rejected, cast aside in the very beginning, also in the middle and naturally in the end. But it must be remembered that the human mind cannot be the judge of what is divine or undivine, there are things the Divine may sanction which the mental being fights shy of. It must leave it to the Divine to choose His instrument and His mode of activity—it is sufficient if the mental being knows by whom it is impelled and where it falls as an arrow shot to its mark: *keneshitam patati preshitam*.

Yes, there is one thing intrinsically evil and undivine and that has to be rejected and cast aside ruthlessly—that is nothing else than the egoistic consciousness. It is this that has passions and prejudices, likes and dislikes, ideas and ideals, formations of its own, other deities installed in place of the Divine Truth and Reality. The ego goes indeed and with it also those rhythms and stresses, lines and shades germane to it that bar the free flow of the Supreme Breath. But the instrument remains and the arms and the weapons—they are cleansed and sanctified: instead of the Asura wielding them, it is now the gods, the Divine Himself who possess and use them.

“Savitri”

A guardian of the unconsolated abyss
 Inheriting the long agony of the globe,
 A stone-still figure of high and godlike Pain
 Stared into space with fixed regardless eyes
 That saw grief's timeless depths but not life's goal.
 Afflicted by his harsh divinity,
 Bound to his throne, he waited unappeased
 The daily oblation of her unwept tears.

BOOK I, CANTO I.

The deepest and the most fundamental mystery of the human consciousness (and in fact of the earth consciousness) is not that there is an unregenerate aboriginal being there as its bed-rock, a being made of the very stuff of ignorance and inconscience and inertia that is Matter: it is this that the submerged being is not merely dead matter, but a concentrated, a solidified flame, as it were, a suppressed aspiration that burns inwardly, all the more violent because it is not articulate and in the open. The aboriginal is that which harbours in its womb the original being. That is the Inconscient Godhead, the Divinity in pain—*Mater Dolorosa*—the Divine Being who lost himself totally when transmuted into Matter and yet is harrassed always by the oestrus of a secret flame driving it to know itself, to find itself, to be itself again. It is Rudra, the Energy coiled up in Matter and forging ahead towards a progressive evolution in light and consciousness. That is what Savitri, the universal Divine Grace become material and human, finds at the core of her being, the field and centre of a concentrated struggle, a millennial aspiration petrified, a grief of ages congealed, a divinity lone and benumbed in a trance. This divinity has to awake and labour. The god has to be cruel to himself for his divinity demands that he must surpass himself, he cannot abdicate, let Nature go her own way, the inferior path of ease and escape. The godhead must exercise its full authority, exert all its pressure upon itself—*tapas taptva*—and by this heat of incubation release the energy that leads towards the light and the high fulfilment. In the meanwhile the task is not easy. The divine sweetness and solicitude lights upon this hardened divinity: but the inertia of the Inconscient, the ‘Pani’ hides still the light within its rocky cave and would not deliver it. The Divine Grace, mellow with all the tears of love and sympathy and tenderness she has gathered for the labouring godhead, has pity for the hard lot of a humanity stone-bound to the material life, yet yearning and surging towards freedom. The godhead is not consoled or appeased until that freedom is achieved and

light and immortality released. The Grace is working slowly, laboriously perhaps but surely to that end: the stone will wear down and melt one day. Is that fateful day come?

That is the meaning of human life, the significance of even the very ordinary human life. It is the field of a “dire debate”, “a fierce question”, a constant struggle between the two opposing or rather polar forces, the will of aspiration “to be” and the will of inertia “not to be”—the friction to use a Vedic image, of the two batons of the holy sacrificial wood, *arani*, out of which the flame is to leap forth. The pain and suffering men are subject to in this unhappy vale of tears—physical illness and incapacity, vital frustration or mental confusion—are symbols and expressions of a deeper fundamental Pain. That pain is the pain of labour, the travail for the birth and incarnation of a godhead asleep or dead. Indeed, the sufferings and ills of life are themselves powerful instruments. They inevitably lead to the Bliss, they are the fuel that kindle, quicken and increase the Fire of Ecstasy that is to blaze up on the day of victory in the full and integral spiritual consciousness. The round of ordinary life is not vain or meaningless: its petty innocent-looking moments and events are the steps of the marching Divinity. Even the commonest life is the holy sacrificial rite progressing, through the oblations of our experiences bitter or sweet, towards the revelation and establishment of the immortal godhead in man.

The *Divine Solicitude* is with you (—you are getting all the help you need). But keep up your *aspiration*, remain *faithful* and the *wrong movement will be changed into the right movement*—so that the *victorious Love* may manifest.

Divine solicitude is supporting you in the *disinterested work* through which you will attain *transformation*.

By *loving consecration* and *faithful service* allow the *Divine protection* to be with you in your *aspiring concentration* for *integral transformation*.

THE MOTHER

SAVITRI

BOOK THREE, CANTO THREE

THE HOUSE OF THE SPIRIT AND THE NEW CREATION

A MIGHTIER task remained than all he had done.
To that he turned from which all being comes,
A sign attending from the Secrecy
Which knows the Truth ungrasped behind our thoughts
And guards the world with its all-seeing gaze.
In the unapproachable stillness of his soul,
Intense, one-pointed, monumental, lone
Patient he sat like an incarnate hope
Motionless on a pedestal of prayer.
A Strength he sought that was not yet on earth,
Help from a Power too great for mortal will,
The Light of a Truth now only seen afar,
A sanction from his high omnipotent Source.
But from the appalling heights there stooped no voice;
The timeless lids were closed; no opening came.
A neutral helpless void oppressed the years.
In the texture of our bound humanity
He felt the stark resistance huge and dumb
Of our inconscient and unseeing base,
The stubborn mute rejection in Life's depths,
The ignorant No in the origin of things.
A veiled collaboration with the Night
Even in himself survived and hid from his view:
Still something in his earthly being kept
Its kinship with the Inconscient whence it came.
A shadowy unity with a vanished past
Treasured in an old world-frame was lurking there,
Secret, unnoted by the illumined mind,
And in subconscious whispers and in dream

Still murmured at the mind and spirit's choice.
Its treacherous elements spread like slippery grains
Hoping the incoming Truth might stumble and fall,
And old ideal voices wandering moaned
And pleaded for a heavenly leniency
To the gracious imperfections of our earth
And the sweeter weaknesses of our mortal state.
This now he willed to discover and exile.
All Nature's recondite spaces were stripped bare,
All her dim crypts and corners searched with fire
Where refugee instincts and unshaped revolts
Could shelter find in darkness' sanctuary
Against the white purity of heaven's cleansing flame.
All seemed to have perished that was undivine:
Yet some minutest dissident might escape
And still a centre lurk of the blind force.
For the Inconscient too is infinite;
The more its abysses we insist to sound,
The more it stretches, stretches endlessly.
Then lest a human cry should spoil the Truth
He plucked desire up from its bleeding roots
And offered to the gods the vacant place.
Thus could he bear the touch immaculate.
A last and mightiest transformation came.
His soul was all in front like a great sea
Flooding the mind and body with its waves;
His being, spread to embrace the universe,
United the within and the without
To make of life a cosmic harmony,
An empire of the immanent Divine.
In this tremendous universality
Not only his soul-nature and mind-sense
Included every soul and mind in his,
But even the life of flesh and nerve was changed
And grew one flesh and nerve with all that lives;
He felt the joy of others as his joy,
He bore the grief of others as his grief;
His universal sympathy sustained,
Immense like ocean, the creation's load
As earth bears all the experience of the race,
Yet thrilled with a transcendent joy and peace.
There was no more division's endless scroll;

The Spirit's secret unity was won,
His nature felt again the single bliss;
There was no cleavage between soul and soul,
There was no barrier between world and God.
Overpowered were form and memory's limiting line;
The covering mind was seized and torn apart;
It was dissolved and now no more could be,
The one Consciousness that made the world was there;
All now was luminosity and force.
Abolished in its last thin fainting trace
The circle of the little self was gone;
A separate being could no more be felt;
It disappeared and knew itself no more,
Lost in the Spirit's wide identity.
His nature was a movement of the All,
Exploring itself to find that all was He,
His soul a delegation of the All
That turned from itself to join the one Supreme.
Transcended was the human formula;
Man's heart that had obscured the Inviolable
Assumed the mighty beating of a god's;
His seeking mind ceased in the Truth that knows;
His life was a flow of the universal life.
On the world's highest line he stood fulfilled
Awaiting the ascent beyond the world,
Awaiting the Descent the world to save.
A Splendour and a Symbol wrapped the earth,
Serene epiphanies looked and hallowed vasts
Surrounded, wise infinitudes were close
And bright remotenesses leaned near and kin.
Sense failed in that tremendous lucency;
Ephemeral voices from his hearing fell
And Thought potent no more sank large and pale
Like a tired god into mysterious seas.
The robes of mortal thinking were cast down
Leaving his knowledge bare to Absolute's sight;
Fate's driving ceased and Nature's sleepless spur:
The athlete heavings of the will were stilled
In an omnipotent and unmoving peace.
Life in his members lay down vast and mute;
Naked, unwalled, unterrified it bore
The immense regard of Immortality.

The last movement died and all at once grew still.
 A weight that was the unseen Transcendent's hand
 Laid on his limbs the spirit's measureless seal,
 Infinity swallowed him into shoreless trance.

As one who sets his sail towards mystiered shores
 Driven through huge oceans by the breath of God,
 The fathomless below, the unknown around,
 His soul abandoned the blind star-field, Space.
 Afar from all that makes the measured world,
 Plunging to hidden eternities it withdrew
 Back from mind's foaming surface to the Vasts
 Voiceless within us in omniscient sleep.
 Above the imperfect reach of word and thought,
 Beyond the sight, the last support of form,
 Lost in deep tracts of superconscient Light,
 Or voyaging in blank featureless Nothingness,
 Or sole in the trackless Incommensurable,
 Exceeding self and not-self and selflessness,
 He reached at last his sempiternal base.
 On sorrowless heights no winging cry disturbs
 Pure and untouched above the mortal play
 Is spread the spirit's hushed immobile air.
 There no beginning is and there no end;
 There is the stable force of all that moves;
 There the aeonic labourer is at rest.
 There is no keyed creation to be watched
 And there no fate-turned huge machinery;
 The marriage of evil with good within one breast,
 The clash of strife in the very clasp of love,
 The dangerous pain of life's experiment
 In the values of Inconsequence and Chance,
 The peril of mind's gamble, throwing the soul
 As stake, with the lights and shadows of the idea
 And equal measures of the true and false
 In that immobile and immutable realm
 Find no approach, no cause, no claim to live:
 There only reigns the Spirit's motionless power
 And its omniscient and omnipotent peace.
 There can no conflict rise of thought with thought,
 Of truth with truth, of right with rival right;
 No trouble comes from a half-seeing world,

No suffering of hearts compelled to beat
 In bodies of the inert Inconscient's make.
 Armed with the immune occult unsinking Fire
 The guardians of Eternity keep its law
 For ever fixed upon Truth's giant base
 In her magnificent and termless home.
 There Nature on her dumb spiritual couch
 Immutably transcendent knows her source
 And to the stir of multitudinous worlds
 Assents unmoved in a perpetual calm.
 All-causing, all-sustaining and aloof,
 The Witness looks from his unshaken poise,
 An Eye immense regarding all things done.
 Apart, at peace above creation's stir,
 Immersed in the eternal altitudes,
 He abode defended in his shoreless self,
 Companioned only by the all-seeing One.
 A Mind too mighty to be bound by Thought,
 A Life too boundless for the play in space,
 A Soul without borders unconvinced of Time,
 He felt the extinction of the world's long pain,
 He became the unborn Self that never dies,
 He joined the sessions of Infinity.
 On the cosmic murmur primal loneliness fell,
 Annulled was the contact formed with time-born things,
 Empty grew Nature's wide community.
 All things were brought back to their formless seed,
 The world was silent for a cyclic hour.
 Although the afflicted Nature he has left
 Maintained beneath him her broad numberless fields,
 Her enormous act, receding, failed remote
 As if a soulless dream at last had ceased.
 No voice came down from the high silences,
 None answered from her desolate solitudes.
 A stillness of cessation reigned, the wide
 Immortal hush before the gods were born;
 A universal Force awaited, mute,
 The veiled Transcendent's ultimate decree.

Then suddenly there came a downward look
 As if a sea exploring its own depths;
 A living Oneness widened at its core

And joined him to unnumbered multitudes.
A Bliss, a Light, a Power, a flame-white Love
Caught all into a sole immense embrace;
Existence found its truth on Oneness' breast
And each became the self and space of all.
The great world-rhythms were heart-beats of one Soul;
To feel was a flame-discovery of God,
All mind was a single harp of many strings,
All Life a song of many meeting lives;
For worlds were many, but the Self was one.
This knowledge was now made a cosmos' seed:
This seed was cased in the safety of the Light,
It needed not a sheath of Ignorance.
Then from the trance of that tremendous clasp
And from the throbbings of that single Heart
And from the naked Spirit's victory
A new and marvellous creation rose.
Incalculably the outflowing infinitudes
Lived their innumerable unity;
Worlds where the being is unbound and wide
Bodied unthinkably the egoless Self,
Rapture of beatific energies
Joined Time to the Timeless, poles of a single joy;
White vasts were seen where all is wrapped in all.
There were no contraries, no sundered parts,
All by spiritual links were joined to all
And bound indissolubly to the One:
Each was unique but took all lives as its own,
And, following out these tones of the Infinite,
Recognised in himself the universe.
A splendid centre of infinity's whirl
Pushed to its zenith's height, its last expanse,
Felt the divinity of its own self-joy
Repeated in its numberless other selves.
It took up tirelessly into its scope
Persons and figures of the Impersonal,
As if prolonging in a celestial count,
In a rapturous multiplication's sum,
The recurring decimals of eternity.
None was apart, none lived for himself alone,
Each lived for God in him and God in all,
Each soleness inexpressibly held the whole.

There Oneness was not tied to monotone;
It showed a thousand aspects of itself,
Its luminous immutable stability
Upbore on a changeless ground for ever safe,
Compelled to a spontaneous servitude,
The ever-changing incalculable steps,
The seeming-reckless dance's subtle plan
Of immense world-forces in their perfect play.
Appearance looking back to its hidden truth,
It made of all fractions secret integers;
It turned all struggle to a sweet strife of love
In the harmonised circle of its sure embrace.
Identity's reconciling happiness gave
A rich security to difference.
On a meeting line of hazardous extremes
The Game of games was played to its breaking point,
Where through self-finding by divine self-loss
There leaps out unity's supreme delight
Whose blissful undivided sweetness feels
A commonalty of the Absolute.
There was no sob of suffering anywhere;
Experience ran from point to point of joy:
Bliss was the pure undying truth of things.
All nature was a conscious front of God:
A wisdom worked in all, self-moved, self-sure,
A plenitude of illimitable Light,
An authenticity of intuitive Truth,
A glory and passion of creative Force.
Infallible, leaping from eternity,
The moment's thought inspired the passing act,
A word, a laughter sprang from Silence' breast,
A rhythm of Beauty in the calm of Space,
A Knowledge in the fathomless heart of Time.
All turned to all without reserve's recoil:
A single ecstasy without a break,
Love was a close and thrilled identity
In the throbbing heart of all that luminous life.
A universal vision that unites,
A sympathy of nerve replying to nerve,
Hearing that listens to thought's inner sound
And follows the rhythmic meanings of the heart,
A touch that needs not hands to feel, to clasp,

Were there the native means of consciousness
And heightened the intimacy of soul with soul.
A grand orchestra of spiritual powers,
A diapason of soul interchange
Harmonised a oneness deep, immeasurable.
In these new worlds projected he became
A portion of the universal gaze,
A station of the all-inhabiting light,
A ripple on a single sea of peace.
His mind answered to countless communing minds,
His words were syllables of the cosmos' speech,
His life a field of the vast cosmic stir.
He felt the footsteps of a million wills
Moving in unison to a single goal.
A stream ever new-born that never dies,
Caught in its thousandfold current's ravishing flow,
With its eddies of immortal sweetness thrilled,
He bore coiling through his members as they passed
Calm movements of interminable delight,
The bliss of a myriad myriads who are one.

A lucent hierarchy of planes was seen
Enfeoffed to this highest kingdom of God-state.
Attuning to its law their own right rule
Each was the fullness of a glad degree,
Alone in beauty, perfect in itself,
Married to all in happy difference.
Each gave its powers to help its neighbours' parts,
But suffered no diminution by the gift;
Profiteers of a mystic interchange,
They grew by what they took and what they gave,
Feeling the rest as their own complements,
One in the might and joy of multitude.
Even in the poise where Oneness draws apart
To feel the rapture of its separate selves,
The Sole in its solitude yearned towards the All
And the Many turned to look back at the One.
An all-revealing all-creating Bliss,
Seeking for forms that manifest truths divine,
Aligned in their significant mystery
The gleams of the symbols of the Ineffable
Blazoned like hues upon a colourless air

On the white purity of the Witness Soul.
These hues were the very prism of the Supreme,
His beauty, power, delight creation's cause.
A vast Truth-Consciousness took up these signs
To pass them on to some divine child Heart
That looked on them with laughter and delight
And joyed in these transcendent images
Living and real as the truths they house.
The Spirit's white neutrality became
A playground of miracles, a rendezvous
For the secret powers of a mystic Timelessness
That, pouring through Time its works of ageless might,
Unveiled as if a luring rapturous face
The wonder and beauty of its Love and Force.
The eternal Goddess moved in her cosmic house
Sporting with God as a Mother with her child:
To him the universe was her bosom of love,
His toys were the immortal verities.
All here self-lost had there its divine place.
The Powers that here betray our hearts and err,
Were there sovereign in truth, perfect in joy,
Masters in a creation without flaw,
Possessors of their own infinitude.
There Mind, a splendid sum of vision's rays,
Shaped substance by the glory of its thoughts
And moved amidst the grandeur of its dreams.
Imagination's great ensorcelling rod
Summoned the unknown and gave to it a home,
Outspread luxuriantly in golden air
Truth's iris-coloured wings of fantasy,
Or she sang to the intuitive heart of joy
Wonder's dream-notes that bring the Real close.
The Power that makes the unknowable near and true,
In the temple of the ideal shrined the One:
It peopled thought and mind and happy sense
With the virgin forms through which the Formless shines,
The words that usher divine experience
And the Ideas that crowd the Infinite.
There was no gulf between the thought and fact;
Ever they replied like bird to calling bird;
The will obeyed the thought, the act the will,
There was a harmony woven twixt soul and soul.

A marriage with eternity divinised Time.
There Life pursued unwearied of her sport,
Joy in her heart and laughter on her lips,
The bright adventure of God's game of chance.
In her ingenious ardour of caprice,
In her transfiguring mirth she mapped on Time
A fascinating puzzle of events,
Lured at each turn by new vicissitudes
To self-discovery that could never cease.
Ever she framed stark bonds for the will to break,
Brought new creations for the thought's surprise
And passionate ventures for the heart to dare,
Where Truth recurred with an unexpected face
Or else repeated old familiar joy
Like the return of a delightful rhyme.
At hide and seek on a Mother-Wisdom's breast,
An artist teeming with her world-idea,
She never could exhaust its numberless thoughts.
Untired of sameness and untired of change,
Endlessly she unrolled her moving act,
A mystery drama of divine delight,
A living poem of world ecstasy,
A kakemono of significant forms,
A coiled perspective of developing scenes,
A brilliant chase of self-revealing shapes,
An ardent hunt of soul looking for soul,
A seeking and a finding as of gods.
There Matter is the Spirit's firm density,
An artistry of glad outwardness of self,
A treasure-house of lasting images
Where sense can build a world of pure delight:
The home of a perpetual happiness,
It lodged the hours as in a pleasant inn.
The senses there were outlets of the soul;
Even the youngest child-thought of the mind
Incarnated some touch of highest things.
There substance was a resonant harp of self,
A net for the constant lightnings of the Spirit,
A magnet power of love's intensity
Whose yearning throb and adoration's cry
Drew God's approaches close, sweet, wonderful.
Its solidity was a mass of heavenly make;

Its fixity and sweet permanence of charm
 Made a bright pedestal for felicity.
 Its bodies woven by a divine sense
 Prolonged the nearness of soul's clasp with soul;
 Its warm play of external sight and touch
 Reflected the heart-contact's glow and thrill,
 The pleasure of the mind, the spirit's joy;
 Life's rapture kept its never-fading bliss.
 All that now passes lived immortal there
 In the proud beauty and fine harmony
 Of Matter plastic to spiritual light.
 Its ordered hours proclaimed the eternal Law;
 Vision reposed on a safety of deathless forms:
 Time was Eternity's transparent robe.
 An architect hewing out self's living rock,
 Phenomenon built Reality's summer-house
 On the beaches of the sea of Infinity.

Against this glory of spiritual states,
 Their parallels and yet their opposites
 Floated and swayed, eclipsed and shadow-like
 As if a doubt made substance, flickering, pale,
 This other scheme two vast negations found.
 A world that feels not its inhabiting Self,
 Labours to find its cause and need to be;
 A Self left ignorant of the world it made
 Struggles to emerge, to be free, to know and reign;
 Yet their convergent lines met not at all.
 Three Powers governed its irrational course,
 In the beginning an unknowing Force,
 In the middle an embodied striving soul,
 In its end a silent spirit denying life.
 A dull and infelicitous interlude
 Unrolls its dubious truth to a questioning Mind
 Compelled by an ignorant Power to play its part
 And to record her inconclusive tale,
 The mystery of her inconscient plan
 And the riddle of a being born from Night
 By a marriage of Necessity with Chance.
 This darkness hides a nobler destiny.
 A chrysalis of a great and glorious truth,
 It stifles the winged marvel in its sheath

Lest from the prison of Matter it escape
And, wasting its beauty on the formless Vast,
Merge into the Unknowable's mystery,
Leaving unfulfilled the world's miraculous fate.
As yet thought only some high spirit's dream
Or a vexed illusion in man's toiling mind,
A new creation from the old shall rise:
A Knowledge inarticulate find speech,
Beauty suppressed burst into paradise bloom,
Pleasure and pain dive into absolute bliss.
A tongueless oracle shall speak at last,
The Superconscient conscious grow on earth,
The Eternal's wonders join the dance of Time.
But now all seemed a vainly teeming vast
Upheld by a deluded Energy
To a spectator self absorbed and mute,
Careless of the unmeaning show he watched,
Regarding the bizarre procession pass
Like one who waits for an expected end.
He saw a world that is from a world to be.
There he divined rather than saw or felt,
Far off upon the rim of consciousness,
Transient and frail this little whirling globe
And on it left like a lost dream's vain mould,
A fragile copy of the spirit's shell,
His body gathered into mystic sleep.
A foreign shape it seemed, a mythic shade.

Alien now seemed that dim far universe,
Self and eternity alone were true.
Then memory climbed to him from the striving planes
Bringing a cry from once-loved cherished things,
And to the cry as to its own lost call
A ray replied from the occult Supreme.
For even there the boundless Oneness dwells.
As if to itself unrecognisable,
It lives sunk down as into tenebrous seas,
Upholding the world's inconscient unity
Hidden in Matter's insentient multitude.
A seed-self sown in the Indeterminate,
It forfeits its glory of divinity;
Concealed is the omnipotence of its Force,

Concealed is the omniscience of its Soul;
An agent of its own transcendent Will,
It merges its knowledge in unconsciousness;
Accepting error, sorrow, death and pain,
It pays the ransom of the ignorant Night,
Redeeming by its substance Nature's fall.
Himself he knew and why his soul had gone
Into earth's passionate obscurity
To share the labour of an errant Power
Which by division hopes to find the One.
Two beings he was, one wide and free above,
One struggling, bound, intense, its portion here.
A tie between them still could bridge two worlds;
There was a dim response, a distant breath;
All had not ceased in the unbounded hush.
His heart lay somewhere conscious and alone
Far down below him like a lamp in night;
Abandoned it lay, alone, imperishable,
Immobile with excess of passionate will,
His living, sacrificed and offered heart
Absorbed in adoration mystical,
Turned to its far-off fount of light and love.
In the luminous stillness of its mute appeal
It looked up to the heights it could not see;
It yearned from the longing depths it could not leave.
In the centre of its vast and fateful trance
Half way between his free and fallen selves,
Interceding twixt God's day and the mortal's night,
Accepting worship as its single law,
Accepting bliss as the sole cause of things,
Refusing the austere joy which none can share,
Refusing the calm that lives for calm alone,
To her it turned for whom it willed to be.
In the passion of its solitary dream
It lay like a closed soundless oratory
Where sleeps a consecrated argent floor
Lit by a single and untrembling ray
And an invisible Presence kneels in prayer.
On some deep breast of liberating peace
All else was satisfied with quietude;
This only knew there was a truth beyond.
All other parts were dumb in centred sleep

Consenting to the slow deliberate Power
Which tolerates the world's error and its grief,
Consenting to the cosmic long delay,
Timelessly waiting through the patient years
Her coming they had asked for earth and men;
This was the fiery point that called her now.
Extinction could not quench that lonely fire;
Its seeing filled the blank of mind and will;
Thought dead, its changeless force remained and grew.
Armed with the intuition of a bliss
To which some moved tranquillity was the key,
It persevered through life's huge emptiness
Amid the blank denials of the world.
It sent its voiceless prayer to the Unknown;
It listened for the footsteps of its hopes
Returning through the void immensities,
It waited for the fiat of the Word
That comes through the still self from the Supreme.

END OF CANTO THREE

Ori Anand

Equality and the Annihilation of Ego★

AN entire self-consecration, a complete equality, an unsparing effacement of the ego, a transforming deliverance of the nature from its ignorant modes of action are the steps by which the surrender of all the being and nature to the Divine Will can be prepared and achieved,—a self-giving true, total and without reserve. The first necessity is an entire spirit of self-consecration in our works; it must become first the constant will, then the ingrained need in all the being, finally its automatic but living and conscious habit, the self-existent turn to do all action as a sacrifice to the Supreme and to the veiled Power present in us and in all beings and in all the workings of the universe. Life is the altar of this sacrifice, works are our offering; a transcendent and universal Power and Presence 'as yet rather felt or glimpsed than known or seen by us is the Deity to whom they are offered. This sacrifice, this self-consecration has two sides to it; there is the work itself and there is the spirit in which it is done, the spirit of worship to the Master of Works in all that we see, think and experience.

The work itself is at first determined by the best light we can command in our ignorance. It is that which we conceive as the thing that should be done. And whether it be shaped by our sense of duty, by our feeling for our fellow-creatures, by our idea of what is for the good of others or the good of the world or by the direction of one whom we accept as a human Master, wiser than ourselves and for us the representative of that Lord of all works in whom we believe but whom we do not yet know, the principle is the same. The essential of the sacrifice of works must be there and the essential is the surrender of all desire for the fruit of our works, the renunciation of all attachment to the result for which yet we labour. For so long as we work with attachment to the result, the sacrifice is offered not to the Divine, but to our ego. We may think otherwise, but we are deceiving ourselves; we are making our idea of the Divine, our sense of duty, our feeling for our fellow-creatures, our idea of what is good for the world or others, even our obedience to the Master a mask for our egoistic satisfactions and preferences and a specious shield against the demand made on us to root all desire out of our nature.

At this stage of the Yoga and even throughout the Yoga this form of desire, this figure of the ego is the enemy against whom we have to be always on our guard with an unsleeping vigilance. We need not be discouraged

★ The Synthesis of Yoga, Chapter IX (Revised Version)

when we find him lurking within us and assuming all sorts of disguises, but we should be vigilant to detect him in all his masks and inexorable in expelling his influence. The illumining Word of this movement is the decisive line of the Gita, "To action thou hast a right but never under any circumstances to its fruit." The fruit belongs solely to the Lord of all works; our only business with it is to prepare the success by a true and careful action and to offer it, if it comes, to the divine Master. Afterwards even as we have renounced attachment to the fruit, we must renounce attachment to the work; at any moment we must be prepared to change one work, one course or one field of action for another or abandon all works if that is the clear command of the Master. Otherwise we do the act not for his sake but for our satisfaction and pleasure in the work, from the kinetic nature's need of action or for the fulfilment of our propensities; but these are all stations and refuges of the ego. However necessary for our ordinary motion of life, they have to be abandoned in the growth of the spiritual consciousness and replaced by divine counterparts: an Ananda, an impersonal and God-directed delight, will cast out or supplant the unillumined vital satisfaction and pleasure, a joyful driving of the Divine Energy, the kinetic need; the fulfilment of the propensities will no longer be an object or a necessity, there will be instead the fulfilment of the Divine Will through the natural dynamic truth in action of a free soul and a luminous nature. In the end, as the attachment to the fruit of the work and to the work itself has been excised from the heart, so also the last clinging attachment to the idea and sense of ourselves as the doer has to be relinquished; the divine Shakti must be known and felt above and within us as the true and sole worker.



The renunciation of attachment to the work and its fruit is the beginning of a wide movement towards an absolute equality in the mind and soul which must become all-enveloping if we are to be perfect in the spirit. For the worship of the Master of works demands a clear recognition and glad acknowledgement of Him in ourselves, in all things and in all happenings. Equality is the sign of this adoration; it is the soul's ground on which true sacrifice and worship can be done. The Lord is there equally in all beings; we have to make no essential distinctions between ourselves and others, the wise and the ignorant, friend and enemy, man and animal, the saint and the sinner. We must hate none, despise none, be repelled by none; for in all we have to see the One disguised or manifested at his pleasure. He is a little revealed in one or more revealed in another or concealed and wholly distorted in others according to His will and His knowledge of what is best for

that which He intends to become in form in them and to do in works in their nature. All is our self, one self that has taken many shapes. Hatred and dislike and scorn and repulsion, clinging and attachment and preference are natural, necessary, inevitable at a certain stage: they attend upon or they help to make and maintain Nature's choice in us. But to the Karmayogin they are a survival, a stumbling-block, a process of the Ignorance and, as he progresses, they fall away from his nature. The child-soul needs them for its growth; but they drop from an adult in the divine culture. In the God-nature to which we have to rise there can be an adamant, even a destructive severity but not hatred, a divine irony but not scorn, a calm, clear-seeing and forceful rejection but not repulsion and dislike. Even what we have to destroy, we must not abhor or fail to recognise as a disguised and temporary movement of the Eternal.

And since all things are the one Self in its manifestation, we shall have equality of soul towards the ugly and the beautiful, the maimed and the perfect, the noble and the vulgar, the pleasant and the unpleasant, the good and the evil. Here also there will be no hatred, scorn and repulsion, but instead the equal eye that sees all things in their real character and their appointed place. For we shall know that all things express or disguise, develop or distort, as best they can or with whatever defect they must, under the circumstances intended for them, in the way possible to the immediate status or function or evolution of their nature, some truth or fact, some energy or potential of the Divine necessary by its presence in the progressive manifestation both to the whole of the present sum of things and for the perfection of the ultimate result. That truth is what we must seek and discover behind the transitory expression; undeterred by appearances, by the deficiencies or the disfigurements of the expression, we can then worship the Divine for ever unsullied, pure, beautiful and perfect behind His masks. All indeed has to be changed, not ugliness accepted but divine beauty, not imperfection taken as our resting-place but perfection striven after, the supreme good made the universal aim and not evil. But what we do has to be done with a spiritual understanding and knowledge, and it is a divine good, beauty, perfection, pleasure that has to be followed after, not the human standards of these things. If we have not equality, it is a sign that we are still pursued by the Ignorance, we shall truly understand nothing and it is more than likely that we shall destroy the old imperfection only to create another: for we are substituting the appreciations of our human mind and desire-soul for the divine values.

Equality does not mean a fresh ignorance or blindness; it does not call for and need not initiate a greyiness of vision and a blotting out of all hues. Difference is there, variation of expression is there and this variation we shall appreciate,—far more justly than we could when the eye was clouded

by a partial and erring love and hate, admiration and scorn, sympathy and antipathy, attraction and repulsion. But behind the variation we shall always see the Complete and Immutable who dwells within it and we shall feel, know or at least, if it is hidden from us, trust in the wise purpose and divine necessity of the particular manifestation, whether it appear to our human standards harmonious and perfect or crude and unfinished or even false and evil.

And so too we shall have the same equality of mind and soul towards all happenings, painful or pleasurable, defeat and success, honour and disgrace, good repute and ill-repute, good fortune and evil fortune. For in all happenings we shall see the will of the Master of all works and results and a step in the evolving expression of the Divine. He manifests Himself, to those who have the inner eye that sees, in forces and their play and results as well as in things and in creatures. All things move towards a divine event; each experience, suffering and want no less than joy and satisfaction, is a necessary link in the carrying out of a universal movement which it is our business to understand and second. To revolt, to condemn, to cry out is the impulse of our unchastened and ignorant instincts. Revolt like everything else has its uses in the play and is even necessary, helpful, decreed for the divine development in its own time and stage; but the movement of an ignorant rebellion belongs to the stage of the soul's childhood or to its raw adolescence. The ripened soul does not condemn but seeks to understand and master, does not cry out but accepts or toils to improve and perfect, does not revolt inwardly but labours to obey and fulfil and transfigure. Therefore we shall receive all things with an equal soul from the hands of the Master. Failure we shall admit as a passage as calmly as success until the hour of the divine victory arrives. Our souls and minds and bodies will remain unshaken by acutest sorrow and suffering and pain, if in the divine dispensation they come to us, unoverpowered by intensest joy and pleasure. Thus supremely balanced we shall continue steadily on our way meeting all things with an equal calm until we are ready for a more exalted status and can enter into the supreme and universal Ananda.



This equality cannot come except by a protracted ordeal and patient self-discipline; so long as desire is strong, equality cannot come at all except in periods of quiescence and the fatigue of desire, and it is then more likely to be an inert indifference or desire's recoil from itself than the true calm and the positive spiritual oneness. Moreover, this discipline or this growth into equality of spirit has its necessary epochs and stages. Ordinarily we have to begin with a period of endurance; for we must learn to confront,

to suffer and to assimilate all contacts. Each fibre in us must be taught not to wince away from that which pains and repels and not to run eagerly towards that which pleases and attracts, but rather to accept, to face, to bear and to conquer. All touches we must be strong to bear, not only those that are proper and personal to us but those born of our sympathy or our conflict with the worlds around, above or below us and with their peoples. We shall endure tranquilly the action and impact on us of men and things and forces, the pressure of the gods and the assaults of Titans; we shall face and engulf in the unstirred seas of our spirit all that can possibly come to us down the ways of the soul's infinite experience. This is the stoical period of the preparation of equality, its most elementary and yet its heroic age. But this steadfast endurance of the flesh and heart and mind must be reinforced by a sustained sense of spiritual submission to a divine Will: this living clay must yield not only with a stern or courageous acquiescence, but with knowledge or with resignation, even in suffering, to the touch of the divine Hand that is preparing its perfection. A sage, a devout or even a tender stoicism of the God-lover is possible, and these are better than the merely pagan self-reliant endurance which may lend itself to a too great hardening of the vessel of God: for this kind prepares the strength that is capable of wisdom and of love; its tranquillity is a deeply moved calm that passes easily into bliss. The gain of this period of resignation and endurance is the soul's strength equal to all shocks and contacts.

There is next a period of high-seated impartiality and indifference in which the soul becomes free from exultation and depression and escapes from the snare of the eagerness of joy as from the dark net of the pangs of grief and suffering. All things and persons and forces, all thoughts and feelings and sensations and actions, one's own no less than those of others, are regarded from above by a spirit that remains intact and immutable and is not disturbed by these things. This is the philosophic period of the preparation of equality, a wide and august movement. But indifference must not settle into an inert turning away from action and experience; it must not be an aversion born of weariness, disgust and distaste, a recoil of disappointed or satiated desire, the sullenness of a baffled and dissatisfied egoism forced back from its passionate aims. These recoils come inevitably in the unripe soul and may in some way help the progress by a discouragement of the eager desire-driven vital nature, but they are not the perfection towards which we labour. The indifference or the impartiality that we must seek after is a calm superiority of the high-seated soul above the contacts of things;¹ it regards and accepts or rejects them but is not moved in the rejection and is not subjected by the acceptance. It begins

¹ *Udasina*

to feel itself near, kin to, one with a silent Self and Spirit self-existent and separate from the workings of Nature which it supports and makes possible, part of or merged in the motionless calm Reality that transcends the motion and action of the universe. The gain of this period of high transcendence is the soul's peace unrocked and unshaken by the pleasant ripples or by the tempestuous waves and billows of the world's movement.

If we can pass through these two stages of the inner change without being arrested or fixed in either, we are admitted to a greater divine equality which is capable of a spiritual ardour and tranquil passion of delight, a rapturous all-understanding and all-possessing equality of the perfected soul, an intense and even wideness and fullness of its being embracing all things. This is the supreme period and the passage to it is through the joy of a total self-giving to the Divine and to the universal Mother. For strength is then crowned by a happy mastery, peace deepens into bliss, the possession of the divine calm is uplifted and made the ground for the possession of the divine movement. But if this greater perfection is to arrive, the soul's impartial high-seatedness looking down from above on the flux of forms and personalities and movements and forces must be modified and change into a new sense of strong and calm submission and a powerful and intense surrender. This submission will be no longer a resigned acquiescence but a glad acceptance: for there will be no sense of suffering or of the bearing of a burden or cross; love and delight and the joy of self-giving will be its brilliant texture. And this surrender will be not only to a divine Will which we perceive and accept and obey, but to a divine Wisdom in the Will which we recognise and a divine Love in it which we feel and rapturously suffer, the wisdom and love of a supreme Spirit and Self of ourselves and all with which we can achieve a happy and perfect unity. A lonely power, peace and stillness is the last word of the philosophic equality of the sage; but the soul in its integral experience liberates itself from this self-created status and enters into the sea of a supreme and all-embracing ecstasy of the beginningless and endless beatitude of the Eternal. Then we are at last capable of receiving all contacts with a blissful equality, because we feel in them the touch of the imperishable Love and Delight that is for ever in the heart of things. The gain of this culmination in universal and equal rapture is the soul's delight and the opening gates of the Bliss that is infinite, the Joy that surpasses all understanding.



Before this labour for the annihilation of desire and the conquest of the soul's equality can come to its absolute perfection and fruition, that turn of the spiritual movement must have been completed which leads

to the abolition of the sense of ego. But for the worker the renunciation of the egoism of action is the most important element in this change. For even when by giving up the fruits and the desire of the fruits to the Master of the Sacrifice we have parted with the egoism of rajasic desire, we may still have kept the egoism of the worker. Still we are subject to the sense that we are ourselves the doer of the act, ourselves its source and ourselves the giver of the sanction. It is still the "I" that chooses and determines, it is still the "I" that undertakes the responsibility and feels the demerit or the merit. An entire removal of this separative ego-sense is an essential aim of our Yoga. If any ego is to remain in us for a while it is only a form of it which knows itself to be a form and is ready to disappear as soon as a true centre of consciousness is manifested or built in us. That true centre is a luminous formulation of the one Consciousness and a pure channel and instrument of the one Existence. A support for the individual manifestation and action of the universal Force, it gradually reveals behind it the true Person in us, the central eternal being, an everlasting being of the Supreme, a power and portion of the transcendent Shakti.¹

Here too, in this movement by which the soul divests itself gradually of the obscure robe of the ego, there is a progress by marked stages. For not only the fruit of works belongs to the Lord alone, but our works also must be His; He is the true Lord of our action no less than of our results. This we must not see with the thinking mind only, it must become entirely true to our entire consciousness and will. The sadhaka has not only to think and know but to see and feel concretely and intensely even in the moment of the working and in its initiation and whole process that his works are not his at all, but are coming through him from the Supreme Existence. He must be always aware of a Force, a Presence, a Will that acts through his individual nature. But there is in taking this turn the danger that he may confuse his own disguised or sublimated ego or an inferior power with the Lord and substitute its demands for the supreme dictates. He may fall into a common ambush of this lower nature and distort his supposed surrender to a higher Power into an excuse for a magnified and uncontrolled indulgence of his own self-will and even of his desires and passions. A great sincerity is asked for and has to be imposed not only on the conscious mind but still more on the subliminal part of us which is full of hidden movements. For there is there, especially in our subliminal vital nature, an incorrigible charlatan and actor. The sadhaka must first have advanced far in the elimination of desire and in the firm equality of his soul towards all workings and all happenings before he can utterly lay down the burden of his works on the Divine. At every moment

¹ *amśa sanātanah, parā prakṛtir jīvabhūtā*

he must proceed with a vigilant eye upon the deceits of the ego and the ambushes of the misleading Powers of Darkness who ever represent themselves as the one source of Light and Truth and take on them a simulacrum of divine forms in order to capture the soul of the seeker.

Immediately he must take the further step of relegating himself to the position of the Witness. Aloof from the Prakriti, impersonal and dispassionate, he must watch the executive Nature-Force at work within him and understand its action; he must learn by this separation to recognise the play of her universal forces, distinguish her interweaving of light and night, the divine and the undivine, and detect her formidable Powers and Beings that use the ignorant human creature. Nature works in us, says the Gita, through the triple quality of Prakriti, the quality of light and good, the quality of passion and desire and the quality of obscurity and inertia. The seeker must learn to distinguish, as an impartial and discerning witness of all that proceeds within this kingdom of his nature, the separate and the combined action of these qualities; he must pursue the workings of the cosmic forces in him through all the labyrinth of their subtle unseen processes and disguises and know every intricacy of the maze. As he proceeds in this knowledge, he will be able to become the giver of the sanction and no longer remain an ignorant tool of Nature. At first he must induce the Nature-Force in its action on his instruments to subdue the working of its two lower qualities and bring them into subjection to the quality of light and good and, afterwards, he must persuade that again to offer itself so that all three may be transformed by a higher Power into their divine equivalents, supreme repose and calm, divine illumination and bliss, the eternal divine dynamis, Tapas. The first part of this discipline and change can be firmly done in principle by the will of the mental being in us; but its full execution and the subsequent transformation can be done only when the deeper psychic soul increases its hold on the nature and replaces the mental being as its ruler. When this happens, he will be ready to make, not only with an aspiration and intention and an initial and progressive self-abandonment but with the most intense actuality of dynamic self-giving, the complete renunciation of his works to the Supreme Will. By degrees his mind of an imperfect human intelligence will be replaced by a spiritual and illumined mind and that can in the end enter into the supramental Truth-Light; he will then no longer act from his nature of the Ignorance with its three modes of confused and imperfect activity, but from a diviner nature of spiritual calm, light, power and bliss. He will act not from an amalgam of an ignorant mind and will with the drive of a still more ignorant heart of emotion and the desire of the life-being and the urge and instinct of the flesh, but first from a spiritualised self and nature and, last, from a supramental Truth-consciousness

and its divine force of supernature.

Thus are made possible the final steps when the veil of Nature is withdrawn and the seeker is face to face with the Master of all existence and his activities are merged in the action of a supreme Energy which is pure, true, perfect and blissful for ever. Thus can he utterly renounce to the supramental Shakti his works as well as the fruits of his works and act only as the conscious instrument of the eternal Worker. No longer giving the sanction, he will rather receive in his instruments and follow in her hands a divine mandate. No longer doing works, he will accept their execution through him by her unsleeping Force. No longer willing the fulfilment of his own mental constructions and the satisfaction of his own emotional desires, he will obey and participate in an omnipotent Will that is also an omniscient Knowledge and a mysterious, magical and unfathomable Love and a vast bottomless sea of the eternal Bliss of Existence.

SRI AUROBINDO

The Future Poetry ★ (Continued)

RECENT ENGLISH POETRY (I)

THE movement away from Victorian poetry is not yet definitive, but we can distinguish certain original indications which may help us to disengage the final whither of its seeking. In the mass it appears as a broadening of the English poetic mind into a full oneness with the great stream of modern thought and tendency. There are experiments of all kinds in language and rhythm and subject-matter and treatment, many notable names each with his special turn and personality, but no supreme decisive speech and no gathering up of the many threads into a great representative work. The whole of European literature at the present time is of this character. All that can be done is to distinguish some common characteristics, a certain persistent element, certain potential issues. The thing that strikes at once in a general view is that it is a period of transition, not yet a new age, but the preparation for a new age of humanity. Everywhere there is a seeking after some new thing, a discontent with the moulds, ideas and powers of the past, a spirit of innovation, a desire to get at deeper powers of language, rhythm, form, because a subtler and vaster life is in birth; there are deeper and more significant things to be said than have yet been spoken, and poetry the highest essence of speech, must find a fitting voice for them.

★ A summary of Sri Aurobindo's *Future Poetry* ("Arya" 1917-1920)

The straining for a new power of rhythm is the first indication of the coming change. Mankind is moving to another spirit in its thought, and this must find its echo and interpretation in poetry, which to express this greater spirit must find out a deeper, larger, more flexible, or, if one may say so, more multitudinously expressive rhythm than the great poets of the past were under the necessity of using; something of the same change has to be achieved as has been successfully in music. The eager and impatient urge of the arriving age to find a full rhythmic basis for its own way of self-expression has led to an attempt to search out new packed or dissolved movements, even to initiate a violent and unprecedented revolution in the whole fundamental method of poetic rhythm.

This tendency in some writers goes no farther than an irregular use of metre, but pushed to its logical issue it has created the still growing form of free verse of which we now find examples in most of the great literary languages and coupled with a theory that this is the one future chance for poetry. Meter and rhyme, half ornament, half fetter, are said to be played out, which can no longer be allowed to chain and hamper the great and free movement which the enlarging spirit of poetry demands. This is a theory of very doubtful validity. In the hands of most of its exponents it seems to be in practice nothing but a licence for writing prose in variously cut lengths, prose breaking off at the end of a clause or in the middle of it to go on refreshed in the line below,—I have seen even a line of free verse consisting of a majestic solitary pronoun,—and that is more an eccentric method of printing than a new rhythm. But without accepting the theory in its intolerant entirety one can appreciate the motive which moved the greater masters and more skilful craftsmen of this form. Life and thought and spirit today need, to express it sympathetically, vast and flowing movements or on the contrary, brief, sudden and abrupt paces or the alternation of these and intermediate variant lengths and turns; it needs some form which shall have the liberty of prose and yet command the intensified heights and fluctuations and falls of the cadence of poetry. There is no reason why not, if the thing can be done—the proof of these things lies in the execution; but it may be doubted whether the method used is the right method. At any rate it has not been fully justified even in the hands of its greatest or most skilful exponents, Whitman, Carpenter and certain French writers. These are things that need to be done, but it remains to be seen whether they cannot be done in the recognised and characteristic movement of poetry, rather than in a compromise with prose cadences.

The most considerable representatives of this new and free form of poetic rhythm are Carpenter and Whitman. Tagore's translations have come in as a powerful adventitious aid. It cannot and does not try to compete with the established principle of measure, and serves certain purposes which could not

otherwise be fulfilled. It is perhaps the only method for the work Tagore intended. Tagore is what some of the French writers of *vers libre* are and Whitman and Carpenter are not, a delicate and subtle craftsman; but in these translations he has no intention of displacing the old way of poetry in which he has done in his own language such wonderful things, by a new principle of poetic movement. If there were any such intention, it would have to be pronounced a failure. Compare his English prose, beautiful as it is, with the singer's own native and magical melodies, even though the intellectual substance is more effective in the translation. In the original the intellectual element is constantly overborne and sometimes almost swallowed up by the waves of suggestion that come stealing in with the music; so much more is heard than is said that the soul listening goes floating into that infinity and counts the definite contribution of the intelligence as of a lesser value. Precisely there lies the greatest power of poetic rhythm for the very highest work that the new age has to do, and that it can be done by a new use in the poetic method, without breaking the whole form of poetry, Tagore's own lyrical work in his mother tongue is the best evidence.

Whitman's aim is conscientiously to make a great revolution in the whole method of poetry, and if anybody could have succeeded, it ought to have been this giant of poetic thought, this spiritual crowned athlete. He is a great poet, one of the greatest in the power of his substance, the energy of his vision, the force of his style, the largeness at once of his personality and his universality. His is the most Homeric voice since Homer, in spite of the modern's ruder less elevated aesthesis of speech and the difference between that limited Olympian and this broad-souled Titan. Whitman will remain great after all the objections that can be made against his method or his use of it, but the question is whether what served his unique personality can be made a rule for lesser or different spirits, will not be fatal when not saved by his all-uplifting largeness.

Whitman's verse, if it can be so called, is not simply a cadenced prose; though quite a multitude of his lines only just rise above the prose rhythm. The difference is that there is a constant will to intensify the fall of the movement so that instead of the unobtrusive ictus of prose, we have a fall of the tread, almost a beat and sometimes a real beat. In this kind of rhythm we find actually three different levels, a gradation which is very instructive. First we have a movement which just manages to be other than prose movement, but is yet full of the memory of a certain kind of prose rhythm. Here the first defect is that the ear is sometimes irritated, sometimes disappointed and baulked by a divided demand. Much of Whitman's work is in this manner; he carries it off by the largeness and sea-like roll of the total impression, but others have not the same success

—even the French craftsmen are weighted down,—and in them the whole has a draggled and painful effect of an amphibious waddling incertitude. But there is a nobler level at which he often keeps which does not get out of sight of prose plain or lift up above all its gravitation but yet had a certain poetic power, greatness and nobility of movement. But it is still below what the master measure of poetry would have given.

However the possibilities of an instrument have to be judged by its greatest effects, and there are poems, lines, passages in which Whitman strikes out a harmony which has no kinship to nor any memory of the prose gravitation, but is as far above it as anything done in the great metrical cadences. This is the arriving at the same secret principle of choric or dithyrambic poetry turned to the law of a language which has not the strong resources of quantity. When Arnold writes such a line as

The too vast orb of her fate

it is this choric movement that he reproduces. When Whitman gives us the dactylic and spondaic harmony of his lines,

Out of the cradle endlessly rocking,
Out of the mocking bird's throat, the musical shuttle,
Out of the ninth-month midnight

or the subtly varied movement of this other passage,

Over the hoarse surging of the sea,
Or flitting from brier to brier by day,
I saw, I heard at intervals the remaining one, the he-bird,
The solitary guest from Alabama,

one has almost the rhythmical illusion of listening to a Sophoclean or Aeschylean chorus. Tagore has recently attempted a similar kind of free verse in Bengali. This then seems to be the natural highwater mark of free poetical rhythm, it is a use of the poetical principle of measure in its essence without the limitations of set form.

We may get some idea of the limitations of the form by one or two examples from the poetry of Carpenter. With a poetic faculty of a higher order, less rough and great than Whitman, he too found it impossible to restrain the largeness of his vision and personality in the bonds of metrical poetry. But his lesser abundance of drive and force makes us feel more the limitations of his form. The total effect is the sense of what might almost call a noble and chanting super-prose rhythm.

Let us take an example from his work at its normal level. He begins with a strain which is just distinguishable from the prose strain, but suddenly rises from it to the beginning of a choric elevation,

“As one shuts a door after a long confinement in the house
—so out of your own plans and purposes escaping,—”

then comes the full choric rise,

“Out of the mirror-lined chambers of self (grand though they be,
but O how dreary!) in which you have hitherto spent your
life,—”

where, if the line had only ended with the parenthesis, it would have been a strain of perfect choric poetry, magnificently thought, imaged and cadenced, but the closing words spoil the effect, for they are a sharp descent to the prose level. These fluctuations appear then to be inherent in the form and a form which in the name of freedom and closeness to life remits and relaxes the austerity of the search after perfection, whatever its other merits and advantages, means a laxity of effort and is a dangerous downward concession.

But there is another objection which may be denied, but seems to me true, that this kind of verse does not give its full spiritual value to the poet's speech. Carpenter has a power of substance, thought-vision, image, expression which is rare and in all these respects he would have been recognised as not only equal but superior to many who have enjoyed in their own day the reputation of poets of the first rank. That he is not so recognised is due to the inferior form. Whitman too for all his energy loses in this way. Their form and movement has not that stamp of something going absolutely home and, having entered, that takes possession and dwells in a calm, yet vibrating mastery. It does only a little more than a highly concentrated prose might do, and this is because of the need of the three indispensable intensities of poetry: it may have intensity of thought and soul-substance, intensity of expression, but the intensity of rhythm, which is poetry's primal need, is lowered and diluted. If that is so, those who use this form to meet the demands of the new age are on the wrong track. But a demand is there, and it indicates a real need. The new age is only at its commencement; the decisive departures, the unforeseen creations may yet be due which will equip it with an instrument or many instruments suited to the largeness, depth and subtlety of the coming spirit, by new discoveries within the principle of the intenser poetical rhythm.

RECENT ENGLISH POETRY (2)

The present age is so loose, fluid and many-motived that even the similarity which the spirit of the age always gives to its work of creation is not easily tangible and works out in much less of a family resemblance than in the Victorian poets or their predecessors. Only in the Celtic revival have there been a number of considerable writers united by a common artistic motive and ideal, and it may be for that reason that a certain persistent thing which is striving to be and get expression in the poetry of the time finds itself in a first illumination, emerges as a conscious power and seeks for its adequate form and rhythm. But we find it elsewhere too in obscurer forms; this is the most original, the most unworked and fruitful in promise for the future and represents the highest possibility of a greater coming poetry. A distinct spiritual turn, the straining towards a deeper, more potent, supra-intellectual and supra-vital vision of things in the innermost secret of creative power. Now increasingly the highest turn of the human mind also indicates a large and similar opening of its vision to self as well as the person of man and the spirit of Nature, an infinite self-discovery which will resolve the present multitude of standpoints, all the conflict and chaos of manifold-seeking and new formation, into the harmony of a centralising and embracing outlook.

The poets of yesterday and today, Whitman, Carpenter, the Irish poets, Tagore, but also others in their degree are forerunners of this new spirit and way of seeing. I may take for my purpose four of them—Meredith and Phillips among recent English poets, A.E. and Yeats of the Irish singers. The former work in the English tradition, have the spiritual opening at moments in a high 'clarity, but follow other attractions, form and treatment which lead away from the pursuit of the direct seeing and the perfect manner. The consistent note we get more consistently in the Irish poets, freer in mind from this past tradition, they have too an original inspiration in the Celtic spirit, temperament and tradition; they escape from the overstress of the intellectual and vital notes which in their English kindred and compeers take from the direct purity of utterance of their spirit, and they also have the artistic faculty and genius. Without having the greatness of scope and plenitude of power they yet lead and prepare, strike great new notes, open or at least give hints of great new ways for a future poetry.

One thing that strikes among all of them is a novel use of rhythmic movement, and as a secret of this departure a quite other conscious aim in the way of seeing the object on which the inner eye is turned. This aim we may perhaps best express if we take up and modify a phrase of Meredith's when he speaks of the hampered human voice that could never say

"Our inmost in the sweetest way." The new turn of the poetic voice is precisely an endeavour to see and to say our inmost in the inmost way.

This inwardness is the triumph of great poetical speech, whether the poet be Homer or Shakespeare. The manner and yield of poetry vary according to the depth we penetrate into that inner something which is hidden by layer upon layer of many an intervening medium, which offers and gives itself wonderfully in all of them, yet seems to retreat always and invites to a profounder pursuit and discovery. But this new way of seeing is a first effort to get through the object and the medium and employ them only as suggestive instruments, to break beyond the life-force and the emotion, the imagination and the idea, not to be stopped by these things, though using the inmost life-stress, the inmost releasing force of the emotion, the inmost plunge of the imagination or its most scorching power of form, colour and symbol, the inmost penetrating subtlety of the idea and to arrive at what we may call the soul-sense, the soul-sound and as far as may be the soul-word interpretative of some yet deeper revealing truth in all their objects. That is the turn of mind which is now making itself heard in effort, though not in full mastery, stammered here, there sung with a slight, delicate, and subtle sweetness or with an initial load of rare or crowding suggestion, but waiting still the splendour of the master-song that shall rise into the light of the spirit,—

So pure that it salutes the sun,
The voice of one for millions,
In whom the millions rejoice
For giving their one spirit voice.

Rhythm is the most potent, founding element of poetic expression, and specially when there is this more subtle spiritual aim, the rhythmical movement becomes of a new importance. We find accordingly the beginning, sometimes something more, of another spirit in the movement of this poetry. These poets use for the most part old established metrical forms or variations of them; when there are departures, they do not go very far from the familiar base; but in their way of using them we are as far as possible in its intrinsic principle from the method of the older poets. The change may be described as a more complex subordination of the metrical insistence to the inner suggestion of the movement. The old poets depended greatly on the metrical fall, made much of the external mould and its possible devices and filled it with the tones of life or thought or the excitement of the thing that possessed them to speech. The following examples show this of course with considerable variation:

Wilt thou upon the high and giddy mast
 Seal up the shipboy's eyes and rock his brains
 In cradle of the rude imperious surge?

These thoughts that wander through eternity.

Rarely, rarely comest thou,
 Spirit of Delight.

For old unhappy far-off things
 And battles long ago.

And wild roses and ivy serpentine.

Breaking the silence of the seas
 Among the farthest Hebrides.

The base of the old poetry is a march, a walk, or a lilt, a measured flow, roll or surge,—even in the freest movement there is a prevailing metrical insistence. In the new movement the old base is there, but whatever show it may make, its real importance tends to drop into a very second place. Insistence of tone has taken full possession of or even conquered the insistence of the fall. A spiritual intonation, not content to fill and at its strongest overflow the metrical mould, but insistent to take into itself and carrying it rather than carried in it, is the secret of its melody or its harmony.

The main reliance on the metrical stress can leave room in powerful hands for very great rhythms, but it has its limitations, from which different poets try to get release by different devices. These more recent poets, whatever metrical devices they may use, depend upon something else, on a method which at its clearest becomes a principle of pure sound intonation.

Phillips' blank verse which is of a very original mould, is built on this principle. Four lines come together,

The history of a flower in the air
 Liable but to breezes and to time,
 As rich and purposeless as is the rose,
 Thy simple doom is to be beautiful,

in which there are only three stresses, in the last one might almost say two and a half, a small number of quantitatively long syllable are the physical support of the verse—as if quantity were trying to come back to first importance in a language of stress,—and the rest is made up of varying minor

tones. Or the long-drawn-out syllables are brought in in great abundance in a variety of combinations, closely packed and largely spaced, as in

The fiery funeral of foliage old.
With slow sweet surgery restore the brain.
The vault closed back, woe upon woe, the wheel
Revolved, the stone rebounded, for that time
Hades her interrupted life resumed.

These and others are the means used, but at their back is the principle of free intonation. The significance is that the poet has a rhythm of thought and spirit already sounding somewhere within him and in bringing it out he imposes it consciously on his outer instrument with an imperious sovereignty and does not get to it, like the old masters, as the result of a faithful observance of the metrical harmony.

Meredith's poetry belongs to an earlier technique, observes faithfully the metrical law, but the subtler thing is already coming.

Through widening chambers of surprise to where
Throbs rapture near an end that aye recedes,
Because his touch is infinite and lends
A younder to all ends—

a description which might well be applied to the whole drift and cause of this spiritual principle of rhythm. A.E. is not a great rhythmist,—he is too preoccupied with his vision, more of a truth-seer than a truth-hearer of the Spirit, but when hearing comes, somehow or other without any expenditure of device the full spiritual intonation rises up and takes possession of the music:

Like winds and waters were her ways:
They heed not immemorial cries;
They move to their high destinies
Beyond the little voice that prays.

And in Yeats, this spiritual intonation is the very secret of all his subtlest melodies and harmonies. We get it in his blank verse, taken at random,—

A sweet miraculous terrifying sound,—

or heard through the slowly errant footfalls of that other,

In all poor things that live a day
Eternal Beauty wandering on her way,

but most of all in the lyrical movements.

This intoned music, to find a form for which these poets are trying, in which the outer form becomes an external subtle means and suggestion, but the building power is different and brings in a spiritual accompaniment which is the real thing we have to listen to, opens at least one line on which we can arrive at that greater hearing whose wave can bring with it the inspiring word of a higher vision. For the musical tone of the older poetry is the simply sensuous, the emotional, the thought or the life tone with the spiritual cadence as the result of some strong intensity of these things, but here is some beginning of a direct spiritual intonation.

SISIR KUMAR GHOSH

Readings from the Upanishads

CONCLUSION

NOW we come to the close of this short series of discourses on the central aspect of the Upanishads. The choice of the texts for the headline of each article was determined with an eye to what we consider to be the most important element, the practical side which is the soul of these Teachings. The texts were all chosen deliberately from the Chhandogya with the exception of one from the Katha Upanishad. The reason will be presently made clear. Now that we are concluding this series we shall put in sum the distinctive features of the Sadhanas dealt with as well as the elements common to all of them. The position we have taken up in regard to the Upanishads we shall explain briefly but in precise terms at the close.

It is generally held that two of the major Upanishads, the Isha and the Taittiriya are most valued by Sri Aurobindo and they are a great support to his Teachings. There is considerable truth in this for the reason that the Isha gives us a comprehensive picture of the ultimate Truth, presents a reconciliation of the Opposites and closes with an appeal to the Gods of the Vedic pantheon Agni, Vayu, Surya, for the uplift of man; while the Taittiriya gives us a vision of Brahman in the graded existence as Matter, Life, Mind, Vijnana, Ananda. But a caution is necessary here: it is not that Sri Aurobindo's teachings in general or his Philosophy in particular are based upon these

Upanishads or any other scripture for that matter, even the Rig Veda or the Bhagavad Gita. At the same time if he values and writes upon them it is because they are not theories and doctrines but Words of Wisdom based upon Truth-knowledge, Truths lived which he finds can always be verified by any aspirant in earnest. If he has not taken up the other Upanishads either for commentary or translation it is mainly because they are very lengthy and require lengthier commentaries and partly perhaps because they are not quite compact like the Isha or Kena. And we know that he could not take up even the Taittiriya for translation or commentary. Therefore it is not to be supposed that the other Upanishads in his view are not of importance or less authentic for acceptance as texts recording the Truth-realizations of the sages of the original Vedanta.

While there are other reasons for selecting the passages of Chhandogya for the elucidation of the chief Sadhanas of the Upanishads, incidentally we have the advantage of studying parts of those texts not dealt with by Sri Aurobindo, thus enabling ourselves to appreciate them in the light of his Yoga and Philosophy in general. But the reason for choosing the Chhandogya is to show that most of the Sadhanas discussed in the Brahma-sutras are taken from this Upanishad though some of these are mentioned in the Brihadaranyaka also. Again it is the Brahma-sutras much more than the Upanishads and the Gita that later became the field for the commentators to fight out the battles for their respective systems of Philosophy. A word about the Brahma-sutras, though an apparent digression, is useful here; for it is necessary to have a clear conception of their character and position in regard to the Scriptures on the one hand and on the other to the systems of Philosophy established by the Acharyas of later times. The main object of this work of Badarayana is investigation (Mimamsa) into the purport of the textual passages of the Upanishads including those which appear doubtful or contradictory and to come to a decisive conclusion. We may note in passing, that there was a threefold division of the Shruti into what is called the Karma-kanda the section dealing with rituals, Upasana-kanda¹ that dealing with worship and meditation and Jnana-kanda that dealing with Knowledge. In the Advaitic tradition of the later Vedantins the Upasanas are drowned in the Karma-kanda and in the commentaries on the Upasanas which form part of the topics in the Vedanta Sutras, they are either treated as subservient to rituals, *Karmanga* or as

¹ Jaimini, the author of Purva Mimamsa, is said to have written sixteen Adhyayas of which the first twelve deal with the Karma-kanda and the last four with Upasana, called Sankarsha-kanda to which references are made in the Sri Bhashya of Ramanuja on Br. Sutras III.3. But the work is lost and is not the same as its namesake available in the Adyar Library. This is the conclusion of specialists in Mimamsa like the late lamented MM. Ganganath Jha.

some sort of help leading to a gradual liberation, *Krama-mukti*, and therefore of course, inferior paths meant for the ignorant and the incompetent. Whether the Brahma-sutras themselves proclaim the ultimate Truth as Nirguna, Impersonal, Featureless, the Beyond, the Absolute, and the Upasanas are all inferior ways of the weaklings is a question that has been debated upon for centuries now and the debate is sure to continue as long as dialectics is the be-all and end-all of scholars and pundits. Nevertheless we may draw attention to the undeniable fact, whatever be the gloss and improvements on it, that the Vedanta Sutras conclude with what is called Saguna Brahman, and true to the Scriptures it affirms in the well-known *Ubhaya-linga* topic, based on the Chhandogya text, that Brahman is at once both Saguna and Nirguna, Personal and Impersonal.

This is the purpose of the Chhandogya chosen for most of the Sadhanas we have discussed in this series. Let us then put in a nutshell the salient features of each of these spiritual disciplines, the Sadhanas of these Scriptures. The Narada-Sanat Kumara episode concerns itself with what is called Bhuma Vidya. The discipline aims at the realisation of the Infinite Self beyond the ignorance. Satyakama's *forte* is Prana Vidya, the discipline that leads to the conscious union with the creative Energy, Prana, the Tapas of Ishwara, and is, as we have noticed, the most dynamic of all the Vidyas of the Upanishads. The *Agni-rahasya* gives us the Vidya of Shandilya and here the soul is envisaged as Spirit in its relation to its embodiment in life, to its encasement in mind as well as to its Source, Support, Power and Light in the all-pervading Purusha. It is the most comprehensive of all the Sadhanas and begins with the centre of the Spirit as soul, the seat of God—the heart; it takes a survey of and aims at the realisation of the All Spirit becoming the soul in each. The Rishis seek from Ashvapati Kaikeya for a knowledge of the Universal Fire which is the Self in each and the all. This discipline called Vaishvanara Vidya aims at the realisation of the Cosmic Self active in each being and starts, as usual with most of the Upanishadic Sadhanas, with the heart. We have not taken up all the Sadhanas mentioned in the Chhandogya Upanishad but the most prominent of them discussed here are sure to give a general idea of the importance attached to them in these texts and also cover most of the other main Vidyas such as the Dahara or Samvarga as has been shown in the discussion on Prana Vidya. From the Brihadaranyaka we took up for clarification the Doctrine of the Mystic Honey,¹ and showed that it reconciles the relative Reality of World-Existence with the Absolute Monism to which the Brihadaranyaka tends in some of its sections—notably the Maitreyi Brahmana

¹ This appeared in the Second Number of the Sri Aurobindo Circle Bombay, under the title of "Vedic Wisdom in the Vedanta".

which precedes the section on the Mystic Honey, called the Madhu Brahmana. Even this Upanishad which in some important parts is the stronghold for the "Lofty Illusionism" of the later Vedantins is not wholly in favour of the negation of world-existence but looks upon it as a Creation of Delight, an Existence which subsists by interdependence of the whole and the part, a Manifestation which subsists because of the Honey, the Madhu in it. The chief points in the Katha text already discussed need not be repeated here. But there is one fact which must be borne in mind that has a bearing on the Sadhana, the practical aspect which was hinted. As a rule the Upanishads teach that the heart is the seat of the soul, the Self, the Divine Being and there one must enter and commune with and realise the Truth, God or Self, the object of his seeking. The Katha indeed throws luminous suggestions in regard to the actual Sadhana that arrives at the goal. But the subtle truth that no Sadhana is possible at all without faith at the very start shall not be missed. It is well known that Nachiketas was afflicted with doubt when he approached Yama but he had also the faith and says so "Teach me, I have faith". In this connection the verses VI, 12-13 are remarkable in that they drive home the fact that It cannot be known by one who does not have the faith that It is there in him. It must be realised within one's own being as the Presence, as the Manifest in him and then its essential Truth as the Unmanifest dawns on him. The Katha emphasises the necessity of realising It here in the bodily existence.

The special feature of each of these Sadhanas lies in the view-points from which the approach is made towards the ultimate reality Atman, God, Brahman full of features or devoid of them. The Bhuma Vidya starts with a strong and constant remembrance, *dhruva smriti*, an intuition—not the same as realisation—earned by purification of the stuff of the instrumental being, *sattwa shuddhi*, which is the same as *dhatu-prasada*, crystalline purity of the temperament. It aims at the realisation of Bhuma, the Plenum, the Infinite Self. The Prana Vidya starts with the Life-principle arriving at its source in the Creative Spirit, the Tapas or the active Consciousness of the Lord. The Shandilya discipline starts with the soul as related to the instruments of life and mind in the bodily existence on the one hand and on the other, to the Light, Power and Will of the Universal Self—a most comprehensive vision that takes in a sweep all the complexities of the soul in its various aspects. The Universal Spirit, the Fire in each being and the all, the feeling and realisation in each of its oneness with the Cosmic Self and Cosmic Life is the theme of Ashvapati in the Vaishvanara Sadhana. The doubt about the survival of something of man that afflicts Nachiketas is just a surface appearance of the hunger of the soul with which Nachiketas starts and receives the initiation from Yama into the secrets

of the Immortal Existence, Manifest and Unmanifest to be realised in this life before the body falls.

But there is a feature common to all the Sadhanas. For there is no mention of the procedure of the particular Sadhana that is expounded, not to speak of the details at all. The Sadhana or Vidya as it is called, is just named after the Teacher or the Initiate or the central aspect of the Vidya itself with a few hints in regard to the object of realisation and its fruit, or even without any hint at all. The reason is not far to seek. For when we carefully go through these texts, ere long we discover the fact that these Sadhanas, these methods of approach were transmitted by the Master to the disciple and verbal instruction when necessary at all to accompany the initiation given, was either not recorded or only briefly hinted at in these Scriptures. And this is so because the real Sadhana begins with initiation and not with oral instruction though the latter may be in some cases helpful giving just a sort of mental satisfaction. This is the central truth of initiation that the Guru gives the method, not the written word, not the spoken word even; but he gives the Word in silence which is a power, an influence that emanates from his being and consciousness so tangibly received and felt that one may say that the Guru himself is born in the disciple, while at the same time the latter is the spiritual child of the Master. Thus an unbroken succession, *santati* of these Vidyas was maintained in the olden times. The Guru then is one who has the capacity to reach his realisations to others who seek him for the knowledge. This truth about the initiation is implicit everywhere in the Upanishads and explicitly stated also in some places as when King Ashvapati addresses Aruni and others saying "I shall make you realise" to which attention has been drawn in the discourse on Vaishvanara Vidya. Again quite straightly the sages in the Prashna Upanishad (VI. 8) address the teacher Pippalada in these words: "Thou indeed art our Father who takes us safe across the other shore of ignorance". Then there is the famous dictum of these scriptures so often quoted by the Acharyas "He knows who has a Guru *acharyavan purusho veda*". We can take it that it is this fact about the true Upadesha that is elucidated in the utterances of Sri Krishna in the Gita—"The Jnanins who are the seers of the Truth shall give the initiation into knowledge...The Jnanin is Myself".

It is beyond doubt that Sadhana was given through initiation by the teacher to the pupil and this accounts for the absence of details or elaborate explanations with which we are familiar in the writings of later treatises on the Sadhana Shastra. And again one notable fact about the Sadhana of the Upanishads is this that even the most abstract form of Sadhana requires for its consummation some help from outside the range of the personal self. The help is obvious in the case of one having a Guru from

the very start as has been already stated. Even in the Bhuma Vidya where the Sadhaka starts on the path with sufficient purity and strength, with a certain settled intuitive grasp of the Truth, it is said Skanda Sanatkumara has to favour him with his help to take him across the other shore of ignorance, sorrow and death. Or we find in the Kena that the Goddess Uma, the universal Matrix has to come to the help of the Gods headed by Indra for the true knowledge of the ultimate Reality, Brahman. Even in the instance of the Atma-sadhana, the Katha and Mundaka texts state that it is the Atman who reveals his own body (of Truth) to him who makes an exclusive choice of the Atman. We may note here the interesting fact that the Atman according to these Scriptures has a will to choose, to reveal its body of Truth thus implying that he is not as mute and absolutely immutable and static as our mind is trained to fancy, not absolutely devoid of the dynamic element, namely, to choose to reveal himself to the exclusive seeker. Or the exclusive seeking itself is the result of the choice that has already been made by the Self. Thus different approaches and their corresponding realisations are mentioned in the Upanishads.

There is another feature common to all these texts. When statements are made either in regard to the disciplines that yield the desired results or to the ultimate Reality which apparently differ, they are not treated as contradictory but are looked upon as authentic, each in its own context. An instance will suffice to show that this is the case. There are texts which proclaim that there are "Two Purushas unborn, *dvau ajau*"; again there are others which speak of the Reality as the One Absolute; at times the same text may contain two different statements which may not seem to be in accord with each other. We find that the authors of the Upanishads nowhere refute any of these texts or statements in part as opposed to truth or as unworthy of notice, but on the other hand treat them as authentic because they know they are statements of facts of spiritual experience. They do not even take the trouble of reconciling such statements as are seemingly opposed to one another because they are alive to the fact that all such apparent contradictions have no bases in the realm of the Truth which can be realised in diverse ways through many aspects. It is not that a reasoned reconciliation of the opposites was not known to them as is evidenced in the texts of the Isha Upanishad. The question of attempting a reconciliation yielding a certain amount of intellectual satisfaction did not occupy the attention of the seers and thinkers of the Upanishads, but was left to Badarayana the author of the Vedanta Sutra. But the commentators who came later on constructed their Systems of Philosophy always based upon a Truth-realisation—as indeed Philosophy in India has always been—sought support for their systems from the Scriptures including the Brahma-Sutras. In the process of interpreting the Sutras for their support they have for the most part undone the work

of reconciliation undertaken by the author of the Sutras. This was because each commentator found certain texts to be convenient and accorded them a place of honour and prime importance, while those that were found not helpful from their standpoint and quite inconvenient for their philosophical constructions were treated as of secondary value. And this was done in spite of the recognition on their part that these texts as a whole are authentic records of Knowledge gained by the sages of the early Vedantas. The resultant position was inescapable that sheer dialectics led to the ditches, to the trenches of philosophical warfare while knowledge and action, *jnana* and *karma*, and laterly, devotion *bhakti* became discordant and warring elements what were and should have been shown to be the elements of concord and peace for a synthetic grasp of these great Sctiptures of universal importance.

Our position then in regard to the Upanishads, especially to their practical importance, may be best stated in the words of Sri Aurobindo who finds that each of the realisations is true and the truth of any one need not and does not nullify the truth of any other. "In liberation the individual soul realises itself as the One (that is yet Many). It may plunge into the One and merge or hide itself in its bosom—that is the *laya* of the Adwaita; it may feel its oneness and yet as part of the Many that is the One enjoy the Divine, that is the Vishishtadwaita liberation; it may lay stress on its Many aspect and go on playing with Krishna in the eternal Brindavan, that is the Dwaita liberation. Or it may, even being liberated remain in the Lila or Manifestation or descend into it as often as it likes. The Divine is not bound by human philosophies—it is free in its play and free in its essence."

One more feature—and this is the last to be mentioned here—common to these Upanishads is that they purport to bring out the truths of the *mantras*, the Veda; even for their conclusions, for their announcements they quote for their support as authority the Vedic seers and their words, the Riks. The appropriateness of the Riks quoted in the Doctrine of the Mystic Honey is an instance in point. The Riks or their seers are very often quoted or mentioned in these texts and this is not due to any kind of sentimental regard, but due to the fact that the sages of the Upanishads knew that there were truths of spiritual and occult knowledge embedded in the Vedas. We have already shown in the discourse on the Vaishvanara Vidya that the discipline was directly inspired by the Hymns of the Rig Veda and quoted a number of passages from the Hymns addressed to Agni Vaishvanara. Above all Sri Aurobindo has shown that beyond a shadow of doubt the 15th and 16th verses of the Isha Upanishad which refer to the Golden Lid covering the face of the Truth are a just reproduction in the language of the Upanishads of the first Rik of the 62nd Hymn in the fifth Mandala

of the Rig Veda. Here we may add that there is hardly any among the major Upanishads which does not make a reference to the Riks or Rishis by way of authenticating their statements.

Now we conclude: our approach to the subject differs in some important respects from that of modern scholarship led by western savants and generally accepted and followed by Indian learning of modern times. Our position in regard to the character and aim of the Upanishads is fundamentally at variance with that taken by scholars in general and to some extent, in one important respect, by indigenous scholarship as well. While it is a fact we admit that the Upanishads are pre-eminently Books of Knowledge, we also hold that it is the Veda that is the source and support of the Upanishads as well as of the Brahmanas which are the Scripture for the ritualists and that it is wrong to treat the Veda, the *mantras* as part of the Karmakanda meant chiefly for the rituals and thus in practice, though not in belief and theory, inferior to the Upanishads for purposes of spiritual Wisdom. Again we hold that the Upanishads are not, in the words of Sri Aurobindo, 'philosophical speculations of the intellectual kind, a metaphysical analysis which labours to define notions, to select ideas and discriminate those that are true, to support the mind in its intellectual preferences by its dialectical reasoning'. On the contrary, they are the creation 'of a revelatory and intuitive mind and its illumined experience and all their substance, structure, phrase, imagery, movement are determined by and stamped with this original character'. Nor are they 'a revolutionary departure from the Vedic mind and its temperament and fundamental ideas, but a continuation and development and to a certain extent an enlarging transformation in the sense of bringing out into open expression all that was held covered in the symbolic Vedic speech as a mystery and a secret'.

T. V. KAPALI SASTRY

Yoga and Life

MAN is the highest product, so far, of nature in evolution. He has been described as the rational animal—a being who possesses, in addition to a material body and an animal vitality, a fine reasoning mind. But even this description of man is inadequate, for it leaves out of account the spiritual and supreme side of his nature. What he takes to be his self 'is an external bit of personality put forward for one brief life, for the play of the ignorance'. It is only an outer movement, a movement on the surface, brought about by the action of his lower faculties,—a half-lit mentality groping about trying to seize what it can of Truth, a blind impetuous vitality rushing about in search of happiness and satisfaction, an inert body passively receiving impacts from the environment and suffering pleasure and pain accordingly. All this surface activity constitutes what we call human life. But deep within us, and above us, resides our true self, our soul served by a subtle mind, a subtle vital and a subtle body. Here, there is a capacity for unlimited wideness, for a direct contact with Truth and for infinite Bliss. Yoga pertains to this real self of man, while what we term life pertains to his surface ego. The question we have put to ourselves in the present article is, what bearing, if any, has Yoga on man's outer life?

To this question there can be various answers. Different schools of spiritual philosophy—such as Monism, Qualified Monism and Dualism—would answer this question from their varying points of view. The Vaishnava and the Tantric would each answer according to his own outlook on life. The matter-of-fact materialist, who denies the spirit as a hallucination, and the world-shunning ascetic, in whose eyes material life is an illusion would, for once, agree and throw out our question as meaningless and untenable. The ordinary Hindu, in spite of the predominant influence of illusionism on religious thought generally, has never considered it improper to invoke divine aid for mundane purposes. In many old odes, still extant, we find the devotee praying in so many words for health, wealth, progeny and fame, and even calling upon his deity to slaughter his enemies for him. Likewise we know of so many sacrifices (Yajnas) performed, in days gone by, for specific worldly ends. The Gita has referred to these and stamped them as inferior ceremonials, 'born of action'. Nevertheless the Hindu has gone on referring all his earthly troubles to his God and seeking succour from Him. These matters are not, strictly speaking, within the scope of our enquiry. They are cited here mainly to show that the

connection between the inner spiritual and the outer material aspects of life has been looked at from widely divergent points of view. It would be impossible to deal with our subject in all its aspects within the narrow compass of a magazine article. We shall therefore restrict ourselves to Sri Aurobindo's Yoga and bring out the more salient points for the consideration of our readers. This we shall try to do largely in the Master's own language.

Sri Aurobindo has called his Yoga the Integral Yoga. It is a synthesis of the various systems that have gone before, and allows for all of them without accepting any single one to the exclusion of the others. In his "Essays on the Gita", the Master, after a cursory review of the several attempts at synthesis since the Vedic age says significantly, "We do not belong to the past dawns but to the noons of the future. A mass of new material is flowing into us; we have not only to assimilate the influences of the great theistic religions of India and of the world and a recovered sense of the meaning of Buddhism but to take full account of the potent though limited revelations of modern knowledge and seeking;...All this points to a new, a very rich, a very vast synthesis; a fresh and widely embracing harmonisation of our gains is both an intellectual and a spiritual necessity of the future". This conveys to us some idea of the marvellous synthesis, on the widest possible basis, given to us by our Master, the great Teacher of Integral Yoga. Unlike previous Yogas it does not aim at personal salvation, although such salvation is a necessary condition of it. One practises this Yoga not for one's own self, nor even for humanity, but for the Divine, and, by it, seeks to work out God's Will in this world and to bring down the supramental powers of His Consciousness into the ignorance of the mental, vital and physical nature of man. Its object is to create a divine life here on earth and to cause to descend a new Nature in the earth-consciousness. This implies a complete transformation right down to the physical, such as was sought for by only a limited few in the former Yogas, and even that as a special siddhi.

The whole world process consists of two opposite movements. One is an ascending movement and the other a movement of descent. The ascent of Matter into the Spirit is called evolution, while the descent of the Spirit into Matter is termed involution. Evolution is, according to Sri Aurobindo, entirely conditioned by involution. That is to say, if the Spirit had not come down into Matter, Matter could not climb up into the Spirit. The going up is unimaginable without the coming down. The order of gradual evolution, as given in *The Life Divine*, is as follows:—Matter, Life, Psyche, Mind, Supermind, Bliss, Consciousness, Existence. The order of descent is naturally the reverse of this. Of these eight planes, Existence, Consciousness, Bliss and Supermind constitute the Parardha or the upper half, while

Mind, Psyche, Life and Matter form the Aparardha or the lower half. The relation between these two hemispheres is this, that each principle in the lower is a diminished or an inferior form of a corresponding principle in the higher. Thus, Matter is the diminished form of Existence, Life of Consciousness, Psyche of Bliss and Mind of Supermind. The negation of the Spirit by the materialist and the denial of Matter by the ascetic, both come from a failure on their part to grasp the dual fact of ascent and descent along a definite grade. Once this movement, up and down, is realised, it becomes obvious that neither the World nor the Spirit can be called a hallucination, and the ancient dictum, "Matter also is Brahman", becomes fully acceptable.

The world is described in the Gita as 'undivided, but appearing to be divided'. That is to say, it is undivided to the supramental consciousness but divided to the mental consciousness of man. Where the Mind and Supermind meet, there exists, between the two, a veil. With regard to this veil Sri Aurobindo says, "The rending of the veil is the condition of the divine life in humanity; for by that rending, the illuminating descent of the higher into the nature of the lower being and the forceful ascent of the lower being into the nature of the higher, mind can recover its divine light in the all-comprehending Supermind, the soul realise its divine self in the all-possessing, all-blissful Ananda, life repossess its divine power in the play of omnipotent Conscious-Force and matter open to its divine liberty as a form of the divine Existence."

The marvellous transformation brought about by the descent of the Supermind into Mind and the corresponding ascent of the Mind into Supermind described by Sri Aurobindo as 'the conquest of death, an earthly immortality.' But this ascent to a higher life, we should note, does not mean a severance from our body, life, Psyche and mind; it implies merely a complete transformation, a divinisation of these principles. Here, there is no question of escape from material existence; the task of evolution is to spiritualise, to divinise it. It is possible to understand the impatience and disgust of the world-shunning ascetic; it is also possible to sympathise with his desire to break the bonds of earthly life and retire into the static silence of the Spirit. But we must understand that his view-point is narrow and one-sided, for he ignores the dynamic aspect of the Lord of creation. As Sri Aurobindo says, "Liberating ourselves from all passion and revolt, let us see what this divine order of the universe means, and, as for this great knot and tangle of Matter denying the Spirit, let us seek to find out and separate its strands so as to loosen it by a solution and not cut through it by a violence". The Vedic seer did not find the world to be a hallucination. Truth-consciousness in the human body was to him a reality. The sage of the Upanishad, too, knew the world to be real when he said, "All this is for habitation by the Lord, whatsoever

is individual universe of movement in the universal motion", and bases thereon the rule of a divine life for man. That rule was the enjoyment of all by the renunciation of all, through the exclusion of desire. "By that renounced thou shouldst enjoy: lust not after any man's possession." Vedantic sayings like "Verily, all this is the Brahman", or "The world is the Brahman, nothing else", or "That thou art", or "He am I", all imply that God is one with every being and every thing that He has created.

Yoga means, literally, union or unification. In spiritual philosophy it signifies essential oneness between the individual soul and the supreme Spirit. This oneness is a perpetual state and not a condition brought about by any Yogic Siddhi. What then does Yoga do? The question has been answered already. It rends the veil between the Mind and the Supermind and gives the sadhaka a realisation of indivisible unity. What is the outcome of this realisation? The Isha Upanishad thus describes the vision of all existences in the Self and of the Self in all existences: "He who sees everywhere the Self in all existences and all existences in the Self shrinks not thereafter from aught". Sri Aurobindo in his commentary calls this vision the foundation of perfect internal liberty and perfect joy and peace. "For by this vision, in proportion as it increases in intensity and completeness there disappears from the individual mentality *jugupsa*, that is to say all repulsion, shrinking, dislike, fear, hatred and perversions of feeling which arise from division and personal opposition to other beings or to the objectivities that surround us." If repulsion and dislike vanish, there can no longer be any room for attraction or preference either. Both attraction and repulsion gone, the sadhaka reaches a state of equality. He changes his human or egoistic view for the divine and universal view, and dwells in that realisation. The higher consciousness has then descended into him. Thenceforth he will act in the world as the Lord acts, out of a supreme Ananda and not as urged by passions and desires.

World evolution has so far traversed the four lower stages of body, life, Psyche and mind and in the ordinary course thereof will pass into the next higher stage of the supermind. Man is in the vanguard of earthly life, and it is up to him to take the leap upward. He must do it consciously and freely. Up till now evolution has proceeded under the guidance of nature acting as the executive agent of the Divine, without any conscious participation of the beings moved along by it. But rational man has attained a position of full responsibility and the next step in evolution has to be taken by his awakened and untrammelled will. In order to bring about this impending change man must collaborate with God. This collaboration is his Yoga.

Now, if at this critical stage he is negligent and slothful, or is wilfully perverse, what will happen, what will be his own fate? Sri Aurobindo has warned us that Nature will, in such a case, find a new medium and carry on

the next evolutionary step by its instrumentality. And man, the defaulter, will, like the monster reptiles of a bygone age, lie dead by the roadside, as Nature's triumph passes along. But this danger can be averted for mankind if a certain number of men would accept the Master's message in time, and make a total surrender to the Divine Mother.

Anyhow, the supramental change is bound to occur. Sri Aurobindo assures us that it is a thing decreed and inevitable in the evolution of earth-consciousness. In fact, there is no reason why the upward trend of nature should stop at man's imperfect and half-lit mentality. The object of Integral Yoga is to prepare the ground in such a way that the higher light, when it descends, might find a ready acceptance with some. It is an essential condition of our Yoga that the entire nature of a sadhaka must surrender itself, in every part and in every movement. The whole being—soul, mind, sense, heart, will, life, body—must concentrate all its powers so completely as to turn itself into an instrument fit to manifest the Divine. This is no easy task, and without Grace from above well-nigh impossible to achieve. Sri Aurobindo sets forth the aim and conception of his Yoga thus: "The Divine that we adore is not only a remote extra-cosmic Reality, but a half-veiled Manifestation present and near to us here in the universe. Life is the field of a divine manifestation not yet complete; here, in life, on earth, in the body, we have to unveil the Godhead;...Life, then, we must accept in our Yoga in order utterly to transmute it". The bearing of our Yoga on life is thus made perfectly clear. Here, on earth, the Yogi must tackle all difficulties. No shirking, no shelving, is permitted. No short-cuts are allowed. No running away from the world and its contacts. The Master had made it perfectly clear that the follower of the Integral path is not fighting his own battle only. His struggle is not a single combat but a prolonged fight on a very wide front. Even when he has vanquished his own enemies he must still fight on for others.

In the course of the sadhana the first step must always be taken by the mind. The essential preliminary consecration has to be made by the sadhaka himself. But the total self-giving, that must follow is a gradual process. For it, the sadhaka must open himself without reserve to the Divine Mother and invoke the aid of his Chaitya Purusha in order to be able to make a total submission of all parts of his being to Her. The Mother's Grace alone can bring our Yoga to fruition.

The hour for the descent of the supermind has arrived. Sri Aurobindo has seen it by his spiritual insight and given us an assurance thereof in the clearest terms possible. His presence on earth today makes this assurance doubly sure. But we have also been warned that the whole human race is not going to rise in a block to the supramental level. A few here and there, those that are fit and open, will receive the Light. They will

form so many foci from which the divine radiance will shed its lustre around, and slowly, but surely, influence the environment. Possibly, for a good long while, humanity will remain divided into two portions,—the plastic and the rigid, the regenerate and the unregenerate,—the latter growing fewer and fewer in number as time goes on, till only a handful of survivals are left over. This sort of thing happened in the past, when out of the anthropoid ape was evolved first the ape-man and then the man. The ape-man slowly died out; man, the new species in evolution, grew in number and importance; while, of the anthropoid apes, only a few survived, more or less as zoological specimens. Supermind, be it noted, is not a new faculty that is being born in man. It has been there always, dormant in the human mind. As we have noted before, the world evolution visualised by Sri Aurobindo is conditioned by the world involution. Because mind once descended out of supermind, therefore is it now going to climb up again to the supramental plane.

We quote here an extract from *The Life Divine* to wind up this all too short a study on Yoga and Life. The extract gives a short but vivid sketch of what man has achieved and what remains to be done.

“At present mankind is undergoing an evolutionary crisis in which is concealed a choice of its destiny; for a stage has been reached in which the human mind has achieved in certain directions an enormous development, while in others it stands arrested and bewildered and can no longer find its way. A structure of the external life has been raised up by man’s ever-active mind and life-will, a structure of an unmanageable hugeness and complexity, for the service of his mental, vital, physical claims and urges, a complex political, social, administrative, economic, cultural machinery, an organised collective means for his intellectual, sensational, aesthetic and material satisfaction. Man has erected a system of civilisation which has become too big for his limited capacity and understanding and his still more limited spiritual and moral capacity to utilise and manage; a too dangerous servant of his blundering ego and its appetites.....Science has put at his disposal many potencies of the universal Force and has made the life of humanity materially one; but what uses this universal Force is a little human individual or communal ego with nothing universal in its light of knowledge or its movements, no inner sense or power which would create in this physical drawing together of the human world a true life unity, a mental unity or a spiritual oneness.”

When man is divinely awakened he will with his supramental vision give a new turn to his whole life. All his manifold activities of today, his pursuit of art, philosophy, science and literature, his social and political organisation, his various institutions, all will acquire a divine meaning and assume a divine form. All this and much more, in fact, a full life of Love

Light and Truth is the reward held out to humanity by Purna Yoga. In the meantime, what is necessary for the sadhaka is a never-failing aspiration, a whole-hearted dedication and a surrender without reserve to the Divine Mother in knowledge, bhakti and action. If man fails herein, his future is dire indeed. The intellectually overgrown Titan will very probably tumble down by his own weight and crush out of existence all that he has achieved so far. Indeed Life requires Yoga for its very being.

C. C. DUTT

Spirituality and the Modern World

(Continued)

III

NOT only is a new and widened consciousness, an enlargement of man's whole vision and outlook, the emergent factor of his growth and development into a higher status and being,—that which we call the spiritual man,—but the principle of such wider consciousness is also forcing itself as the dominant ideal through a growing number of modern thinkers. Unfortunately however, although the awareness is there even in its embryo, the visible signs of its appearance in modern man himself are far from manifest. In the first place, it is the individual effort and awakening that must be the basis and key to this higher growth. For, as we have traced, it is the individual soul-centre which is the very seed-potential of a new mutation and transformation. And it is the Spirit-centre within that must, even from its first obscure stirring, guide and take the lead in the whole of man's integral progress. In this, man's ego or mind-centre must increasingly be subordinated and opened to this innermost entity. Secondly, it is the basic ignorance of modern man that he lacks the very awareness of that centre within, which is the real mainspring of his higher evolution and spiritual growth. This is the primary ignorance of modern man from which all his other blindnesses and perversions spring. Firmly rooted and fixed in his egoistic centre, and dominated by the dividing mind,—with its eternal conflict of mental concepts and ideas,—he will not relinquish that habitual standpoint and action-centre which is his present status. There is not only the powerful pull of mind to retain its mastery over man, but there is also the fear in man himself of relinquishing an entity and condition he knows so well, for one which appears to be only a Vast, a Void and an Unknown.

To become conscious of his soul-entity is, then the primary need of man's higher evolution; but he must also become aware of that greater Reality of which his soul is but a part, and of which the whole movement of Universal Nature is but an outflowing Conscious Force. This is the Godhead, the Supreme and integral Reality. For while soul-awareness is the reconciling factor bridging man's endeavour towards a higher and wider consciousness with the ever-present reality of the Truth-plane above, it is God-knowledge and God-awareness that is the all-embracing, fundamental need and condition for awakening this inner Light in man to a realisation of its own true status, that of the divine nature secreted within him. It is, in fact, the Divine Himself Who is the real integrating Power, raising man from his ignorance and darkness into a luminous awareness of the divine nature in all things. The Divine alone can mould man and reconcile the triple elements in his struggle,—that of the Truth-plane above, transcendent and seemingly remote, that of the universal movement or evolutionary force, and that of the divine Immanence in man himself, his soul-entity. God alone is the Supreme and all is His, because He is not only contained in all and in each particle and movement of the universe, but He embraces all, and yet in his own supracosmic Transcendence, He is above and beyond all movement. This is the mystery of the Supreme Divine. And to become conscious of the Divine in all appearances and statuses, in all His conditions, is the one way towards knowing the entire and integral Reality. This is a primary and basic need of modern man, who has either rejected God completely, or has reduced Him to one partial manifestation of His Infinite Being,—such as all-pervading Ether, an Absolute, an Energy, Cosmic Force or Universal Spirit, the Life or Time-Spirit, Mind Principle or Universal Mind. But He is all these at once, and infinitely more.

The Supreme Reality—that whom we call God or the Absolute or, more integrally the Divine—is not only above in the high heavens, He is also here in every grain, atom and cell of the universe. It is He who is the multitudinous souls as well as the All-Soul of the universe. He is that in which everything in the universe is contained, He is the Spirit pervading all, and He is the fundamental existence of each, as the individual centre, nucleus or soul. But it is because He is eternally above all His creation,—in His own Supreme Transcendent Reality, immutable and ineffable,—that the two apparently paradoxical faces of the Divine (His divisibility into the many, immanent in each, and yet remaining always the one eternal Soul in which all is contained), are ultimately reconciled in the Person of the Supreme Godhead. It is supremely He, Who though unaffected even in His own transcendent glory, yet by His extension and separation into the universal creation of space and time, has descended into the very

depths of inert matter, the Inconscient, in order to become its very Soul and Conscious Force, and so evolve a new order, a divine order, in this terrestrial field and play. And it is He, finally, who dwells secreted in the heart of each individual.

But the separation of modern man from the wider, cosmic spiritual knowledge has certainly deprived him also of the full integral knowledge of God. As we can see, the natural source and inspiration of western man's religious knowledge, has almost entirely been from the anthropomorphic field of the Near East. Even from the time of the Patriarch Abraham, this ancient cradle of culture had already begun to develop its characteristic pattern,—an aspiration for God which was at once intense, shut-in and narrowly fanatical. From the beginning there was that yearning and intense seeking for the Personal God, who became, in their exclusive devotion, the God of the chosen people. The One God became, in effect, the God of Israel, narrow and sectarian. It was, however, during the sixth Century B.C. that this intense aspiration for God, as a personal reality to descend into their midst, reached a new height for those fanatical desert folk. This was the time of the Prophets, of whom the most outstanding, in many respects, was Isaiah. Interestingly enough that self-same period was also one of great significance in the world cultural development as a whole. It was a time when the then emerging cultures, after a phase of indrawn and separative development, blossomed forth, each revealing a Light which was later to influence the entire subsequent thought and outlook of the world. It was the period of Lao Tzu and Confucius in China, of Buddha in India, of Zoroaster in Persia, of Pythagorus in Greece, as well as of Isaiah in Palestine. Taking two of the spiritual developments of that time as our central focus—the Hebrew on one side and the Indian on the other,—we can see clearly the sharp division and even apparent opposition of two spiritual streams of thought which were later to divide the world into the characteristic Eastern and Western halves. For where one stream was subsequently to feed and nourish the whole western religious development, the other was to provide the Far East with its basic religious thought and outlook. On the one hand, centred around the inspired aspiration of the Hebrew Prophets, there was the ardent straining for some descent of the Godhead,—the yearning for His Revelation to the "chosen people",—that is, the people chosen of God, through whom He would surely reveal Himself. In those prophetic utterances of which record yet remains, the Personal God, the One God Supreme is exalted above all, and the Grace of God is exhorted. Thus Isaiah: "With my soul have I desired Thee in the night; yea with my spirit within me will I seek Thee early". Like a trumpet-blast from the hill-tops, the note is sounded, and was later to resound through the whole western religious life. Salvation for those

desert Prophets, signified the coming of the Lord God (of Israel), and the pouring of the waters of His Spirit over the earth. Without His Spirit and Grace the earth is parched and dry, and corruption reigns everywhere. It is only the cleansing waters of God's Spirit that can purify the people, fertilise the earth, and sustain righteousness over all.

On the other hand, in India, there was being expounded quite a different spiritual message. Already, after the period of the Upanishads, the unitive and intuitive illumination was breaking and spreading into diverse streams and branches. One of the strongest of these branches, and one which occupied the central focus of Indian spirituality for a number of centuries, was the enlightened message of Buddha. His was the austere teaching of the solitary and individual endeavour. It was the heroic call of man to the scaling of the bare bleak heights of the Spirit to reach the unchanging Transcendent. Self-discipline, self-purification and right action, were the sovereign means whereby this courageous effort could be accomplished. And how compelling was the goal of Nirvana which meant individual release from that interminable round of misery, suffering and bondage! It is little wonder that the calm, peace and contemplative stillness of this enlightened Way drew together its multitude of adherents. But it was fundamentally the teaching of individual salvation,—showing man the way towards an utter extinction of his own egoistic personality, and his total absorption and annihilation in the stillness of the Absolute,—and for this reason it was a contradiction of any purpose in the universal movement and change, as well as a negation of any meaning in man's existence in this terrestrial life. And without meaning and purpose, the whole of his worldly life became one grand Illusion. This world-negating outlook formed the very basis and foundation of what grew into the characteristic thought and mode of life of the East.

Thus we see the beginnings of those distinctive and separative developments which were to divide the whole cultural world into two halves, with that seemingly unbridgeable gulf between. But it is abundantly clear that beneath all this division and separation there yet remained the indivisibility of the Integral Divine and of His working here in the whole of this terrestrial movement. For the anthropomorphic God of the Hebrews, and the unchanging Transcendence of Buddha, are not two separate and irreconcilable faces, as they appear to be, but two sides or aspects of the self-same Reality; since the Divine embraces both God the Person, and God the Immutable Transcendent in His true integral Wholeness.

Although Buddhism had spread its influence over a wider field outside India than any other Indian spiritual branch, there was preserved within India herself the latent deposit of an ancient dynamic spirituality. In the long history of India's spiritual growth, the Buddhistic outlook and teaching was but a partial vision, one limb which had outgrown itself and which

subsequently became a separate force, though still leaving its cast on the whole thought-development of India. Yet in spite of that world-negating outlook there persisted in the very heart of her culture, the Word and the Truth-seed of her ancient Seers. Perhaps more than any other scripture it was the Gita which preserved in the very hearts of the people the true living reality of the Supreme. It was this wide and all-embracing vision of the Divine which became the very core of Indian culture, uplifting it and bearing it through all its decadence and outer decay. In order to see the hidden message and comprehensive vision of God as it has been preserved in this ancient revelation, let us briefly examine that teaching as it has been presented to us in its modern form by Sri Aurobindo in "Essays on the Gita". First of all we have the cosmic revelation of all existence as a divine movement opening out from God and returning to God. In this movement, Nature is but a power of the Divine which works out the consciousness and will of the divine soul that dwells within her. Thus from the very outset there is no absolute duality of Spirit and Nature (though it appears so at first to our ordinary awareness of things). The spirit is the Supreme in His infinite consciousness, and the supreme Nature is the infinity of power of the Spirit. But even within this largest and widest cosmic movement, the supreme Nature has formulated itself as the individual soul-centre, in order to provide the spiritual basis for the manifold universal becoming. In this way the individual soul, atom or nucleus is the basis of the multiple existence. It is because the soul is the very stuff of this divine Nature, that it ever seeks to go back to that higher law of being in which it can discover the will, the power, the dynamic principle and highest working of its own divine nature.

Secondly we must also realise that the true and supreme spiritual nature of the Divine is not imprisoned in the forms of the lower nature; rather are these latter merely phenomena in His being. Thus we may feel the soul to be in the body and so a derivative of it, but in actuality the body is in the soul and a result of the soul. It is the lower nature which falsifies values and inverts truth itself. It is only in the higher cosmic vision that we can become aware of the three powers or statuses of the Divine,—the Supreme, the Spirit and the Soul,—in which the Supreme is not only remote from us in some transcendent status beyond, but he is here too in the body of every being, in the very heart of man and in Nature. Only in our first realisation and approach to the Divine Reality do we experience the difficulty of reconciling the impersonal with the personal, and the omnipotent soul with mechanical Nature. This is because our approach is with and through the mind or intellect. Thus one has to grow into the Highest and become It, in order to really know. It is then that at each step a new aspect or experience of the Divine is revealed to us. In this

way we discover that mechanical nature is but a lower truth of the Supreme Reality; there is a higher truth which is the spiritual, and which is also the nature of our own soul personality. But beyond our first conceptions and progressive experience of the Divine, the Gita points to another revealing spiritual experience in which we are forced to see as the very Divine all things, not only that Spirit which dwells immutable in the universe and its countless creations, but all this inward and outward becoming. All is then a Divine Reality. And even then, Cosmos is not the Divine in all His utter Reality, but a single self-expression. For the Divine is something greater than the universal existence. It is only, finally, in the integral Divine Himself that each status or mode is reconciled and seen as infinite parts of one whole.

Even in the light of this wide and all-embracing God-knowledge, where the very existence of man would seem to be an insignificant consequence, the Gita's teaching never loses its hold on the significance for the individual which this knowledge reveals. It is only by seeing the outer form and aspects of Reality that man's mind is bewildered and loses its bearings. The very first step in his own integral progress must inevitably be to turn from the outward to the inner,—to the divine Reality itself. Once the secret and inner Godhead is known and embraced, the whole being and the whole life will undergo a sovereign uplifting and a marvellous transmutation. "The great form of God" says Sri Krishna, "can be seen, known and entered into only by that Love which regards, adores and loves Him alone in all things". For the Divine is no mere metaphysical concept, however lofty it might be, but a living Reality which dwells even in the heart of man himself,—an ever-present Reality to which man can always turn with the uttermost surrender of all his being. It is here in the Gita that "this greatest reconciling Oneness of all aspects of the Divinity are manifested; the transcendent, universal and individual Godhead, Spirit and Nature, Infinite and finite, space and time and timelessness, Being and Becoming, all that we can strive to think and know of the Godhead whether of the absolute or the manifested existence are wonderfully revealed in an ineffable oneness". (Sri Aurobindo in "Essays on the Gita"). Such is the Gita's illumined vision of God which stands even to-day as the most fundamental basis of man's knowledge of God and the Integral Reality.

We have already seen how the separation of East and West had arisen from the divergence of two central spiritual streams, which were not really opposed to each other in any absolute sense, but which were rather complementary, though each preserved its own line of endeavour to the exclusion and oblivion of the other. In one, being essentially the aspiration for the descent of the Godhead on earth, the aim was in its widest and most catholic expression more towards a salvation for the world. In the

other, it was the quest for individual ascent into the heights of the Transcendence, and hence its aim was always turned away from earth, towards the liberation of each individual through his own self-enlightenment. It is thus clear that one partial truth without the other would sooner or later tend towards an unbalance and disharmony. For the exclusive stress on a universal descent without the accompanying means for the individual growth (which happened in the West), was sooner or later to precipitate Western man wholly in the materialistic way of life,—losing the central inner core of Reality and regarding only the outer or surface as the whole reality. In the same way an all-too exclusive preoccupation with individual ascent (as it occurred in the East) was to completely disregard the world of humanity, its life and material condition, its pain, suffering and evil. But since the goal of the universal movement, as we realise from the integral spiritual Truth, is for the world and humanity as a whole through the individual, there had to be the attempts towards an integration of these two apparently separate ways. In the past, there have in fact been brief though powerful phases of fusion and coming together. One coalescence was the absorption of Indian and Buddhistic influences of thought by certain Near Eastern sects, notably the Essenes (though there were many others between the Tigris and the Nile valleys). Later there was the attempt towards a wider fusion when Jewish and Indian mysticism combined with Greek intellectuality to bring about some intellectual and tangible basis to the new religious movement whose spiritual birth had sprung largely from the earlier coalescence. But these were, radically, only partial and tentative fusions, and not integral in the widest spiritual sense, though of course their effect for the whole western world was of supreme consequence. Even though it was almost global in its wide sweep over the earth, the religious movement which had sprung from that fusion, had not fundamentally assimilated the wider cosmic or supracosmic vision which was the essential root of Indian spirituality. In the first place only a part of India's rich store of spirituality had been given to the world, for India was as yet withholding her real essential knowledge,—that of the dynamic Reality. The spiritual message which India had given to the world in Buddhism was only a partial aspect of the integral Truth,—the negative complement of her more positive and dynamic Spirit. And also it is now apparent that the world was not yet ready to receive that full and integral spirituality. It is only, perhaps, in this present age of world-wide communication and global interrelation that we see the greater possibility for the One World to really emerge. The very re-appearance in this modern age of India's ancient spirituality in its living and dynamic expression, is a further indication that the wider attempt towards world unity and integration is actually being made. For even behind all the present wide-spread upheaval and disruption, there

is the deeper movement towards a human unity and enlightenment. And in spite of all disaster and human suffering, the hand of the Divine Himself is slowly but surely turning and leading man towards a realisation of his own essential unity,—but a realisation that must necessarily spring from a wider consciousness. And this implies man's own individual effort..

In the West the development and stress on the physical basis of life has been, in spite of the grave danger of its excess, a necessary and significant phase in the evolution of man,—for it represents the lowest and deepest permeation of mind, through man, into the depths of matter, even to its very atomic soul. But as we can see, in its lowest and innermost movement, mind is not the surest or most powerful instrument for that penetration into life and matter, nor is mind the end of the terrestrial evolution. It must finally be the very stuff of Soul which has to emerge, penetrate into and take possession of the earth-life itself. This can only be achieved both through the individual, wherein the Spirit lies hidden and secreted, and from above where the universal Soul is still as yet veiled to man. Hence this, the Soul's growth and opening to the Divine is the true beginning.

N. PEARSON

To believe that one is being constantly guided by the Divine in the heart is not necessarily surrender. It is necessary to be detached, to see what are the divine forces and undivine and to reject the undivine forces. It is only by this discrimination that one can make a true surrender to the Divine in the heart.

Sri Aurobindo

Review

Selections from the Writings and Speeches of Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar. Vol. I & II. Edited by P. G. Sahasranama Iyer, M. A., Trivandrum.

India is on the threshold of independence or, as Sir S. Radhakrishnan remarked the other day, India is now practically independent. Indians, who have been so long governed by others, have now to govern themselves and must rise to the height of the occasion. On account of long subjection as well as faulty education, the average Indian has not the habit of thinking deeply or seriously, he has left all the thinking to be done for himself by a few top-ranking leaders. "Our life and our conversation are hollow and ineffectual. Surface meets surface, as Thoreau asserts in his famous Essay on Life Without Principle. Journalism, the Wireless, the Gramophone and the Cinema symbolise the pace at which things now move which in turn has led to the habit of surveying only the headlines of life and to what has been aptly described as the macadamisation of mind, its foundation being broken into fragments for the wheels of present-day civilization to travel over." Yet India was the land of philosophers; nowhere else in the world the human mind has made such great adventures and so sounded the depths and scaled the heights of existence. Even a cursory study of the systems of Indian thought itself would be a great remedy for this disease of superficial thinking, and unless the average Indian learns to think for himself seriously on all the affairs of life, there is no hope of a true democracy growing up in the country. But philosophy today seems to be the most unpopular subject in India; as there is some interest in political and economical matters, these subjects should be studied more deeply than is possible only by reading the morning papers. For such a study the present collection of the writings and speeches of Sir C. P. Ramaswami would be eminently helpful. All subjects of vital practical interest to present-day India have been dealt with in a style which combines lucidity with depth and with an outlook which is eminently Indian, and not a mere imitation of the West which is so very common even among the foremost of our present leaders. Unlike many others he does not feel called upon to make an apology for his being a Hindu or his professing himself to be one. And this, though he knows what the idea in Europe about the Hindu is, "an indolent, mysterious and impracticable person unfit for the battle and controversies of the world, fit to be pitied or at the best patted on the back, but not specially useful to himself or to the world." His delineation of the nature of culture and the defence of Hindu culture is particularly useful at this time when even educated Indians have crude ideas about it. To the question, what are the essentials of Hindu culture, he replies: "The first trait characteristic of Hindu culture is, according to me, courage and self-reliance. There was nothing, no domain of thought, no impossibility, no supernatural barrier, no natural obstacle, that stood in the way of the Indian people penetrating into the arena of the Unseen and Unknown.

Those of us who remember the Kathopanishad know that when Nachiketas was sent away from his father's house and asked to repair to the domain of Yama he went thither. Yama was pleased with him and wanted him to choose three boons, Nachiketas asked the third boon in this famous verse: "There is speculation among men as to whether, after death, the soul exists or does not exist. This I should like to know." Yama did not want to confer this boon as it meant the disclosure or revelation of the knowledge of the Omniscient and Omnipresent. So he attempted to side-track Nachiketas from this quest and offered him, as alternatives, progeny, cattle, elephants, horses, gold, empire, longevity, etc. But the boy was not to be easily turned away from his pursuit and he insisted: "Tell me, Yama, what it is they inquire into as to the great question concerning the next world. I want no other boon but the privilege of learning the secret knowledge." Realising that he had a student who was in deadly earnest, he unfolded to him the true nature of the Soul and Over-Soul. Nachiketas is a type of the dauntless and eternal Hindu search for the ultimate.

The Hindus did not take God for granted. That has been one of the characteristics of Hindu philosophy and the Hindu doctrine of life. They wanted each man to be the witness of truth as it was revealed by personal experiences to each man. This is what Yoga attempts to achieve. Another characteristic of Hindu culture is that it is able to comprehend within itself the worshipper of a stone image and the worshipper of the Shuddha Advaita. Remember what Lord Krishna says in the Gita: "They who worship other deities, with faith and devotion, in reality worship Me." On a survey of Hindu thought we shall find—whether the approach be through pantheism, polytheism or even atheism—that there is nothing that cannot be comprehended in the synthesis which we dare to call Hindu Culture. This courage in grappling with all problems and this conscious synthesis are two predominant characteristics of the Hindu Culture. Sir Ramaswamy mentions a third. "Throughout Indian art, literature and Indian life, there is an abiding consciousness of the Infinite, and the immanence of the Divine in small things as well as great. This, to my mind, is a special characteristic of Hindu Culture. To illustrate this, let me deliberately choose two subjects like mathematics and grammar—most apparently distant from what may be called culture in the aesthetic sense. Most of us have been painful sufferers from the rules of grammar; some of us habitually break those rules; others endeavour not to do so, with results not entirely successful. But grammar as understood in most countries has always been regarded only as an instrument, a humble, necessary but not inseparable adjunct of culture. It is in India alone that Patanjali and those who followed him thought and spoke of the worship of the Shabda Brahman as "Shabdabrahmopasanam". They have sought to analyse every sound. Each word, each sound, has a life-history of its own, linked up with the science of the *nadabrahma*, the Supreme manifested as sound or Logos."

As the first landmark of Hindu Culture, he points to the Rig Veda which comprises the beginnings of all subsequent speculation on the unity of life and the immanence of the Divine in all that is. "There is only One that exists. Learned men speak of it differently." The Rig Veda exemplifies what the Gita later on stresses, namely, that the life spiritual and the life in the world are not antagonistic but mutually complementary and supple-

mentary. Hindu Culture appreciated the differences among men social, tribal, cultural, hereditary and otherwise, but also gives chance for everybody to progress from stage to stage towards the ultimate goal of liberation. Those persons also mislead who seek to justify the excrescences of the caste system as it exists today, merely because there was an original fourfold classification of men according to *karma* and *guna* and Sir Ramaswamy boldly asserts that caste is not part of the true Hindu spirit or of Hindu culture.

Our leaders are now busy framing a constitution for India. It seems to be taken for granted that India must have some form of the Parliamentary system. But India has her own genius in politics, and we are quite sure that the Parliamentary form of democracy will not be suitable to India, however useful it may be as a temporary or transitional device. Sir Ramaswamy also has expressed the same sentiment and given the warning. He says: "The ideas and ideals of each country as they progress from age to age have, and indeed ought to have, something racy in them and that in politics as well as in literature and the arts, nothing that is not evolved from within and is not in harmony with inherited as well as individual traditions will be characteristic or essentially fit to live. Today we are producing and putting to practical use new constitutions. New thoughts are thundering at our doors and while we shall do well, as throughout our history, ever to be tolerant and hospitable to fresh views, nevertheless, we must also be alive to the need for assimilating them with our own culture and we may as well imitate the wise gardener when for improving the yield, he skilfully inserts a graft." And a practical philosopher and statesman as he is, he has not rested by merely expressing a sentiment but has brought together in short compass some of the multiform theories that have been adumbrated in our country during many centuries.

It is gratifying to remember that though India has been under foreign rule for a long time—indeed almost all countries in the world have had to pass through this ordeal which seems to have been a necessary evil—almost one-third of India has always been self-governing and has retained something of her ancient regime. In his lectures on Progressive Travancore we see much of the inner working of a native State. We shall refer here only to two subjects out of the many with which Sir Ramaswamy deals with his characteristic insight and practical wisdom. He is not blind to the failures and the shortcomings. Thus referring to the Co-operative Movement he says it has been a failure in Travancore as indeed it has been, on the whole, a failure in the rest of India; and he has analysed the causes of the failure and suggested the remedies as he is convinced that it is only through the Co-operative Movement that post-war reconstruction and agricultural rehabilitation is possible. In order to succeed, the movement must be inspired by the true spirit of co-operation and not by selfish motives or the profit-making spirit. Referring to the movement in the past in Travancore he says, "in short it became a pestiferous organisation, which was ruining village-life instead of being an elevating factor of village-life. We have resolutely to look into the causes of this disease and cure it. It can only be done in one way. Whether in the process of production or of marketing or some other disposal, it can only be done by the uprush of a missionary spirit." "For many years all of us were repeating parrot cries that we should start a dairy movement as in Denmark or some other co-operative scheme as in Germany

and so forth. But the Co-operative Movement should have started in the direction of re-vivifying the old village-community in which each man knew his neighbour, knew his transactions, had the right and the opportunity to set the other man on the proper track and was a kind of moral and financial censor. The village-community has decayed; and it should have been the objective of the Co-operative Movement to revive it in small localities. In big localities, the methods of big business might become necessary."

The other subject to which we want to refer is temple entry. Now-a-days we often hear that some temple or other in South India has been opened to the Harijans. The honour of being the pioneer in this matter, as also in the matter of abolishing the capital sentence, must go to the Travancore State. Speaking on the occasion of the Temple Entry Proclamation Day, on 12th November 1944, he justified the act by expounding the fundamentals of Hindu Faith.

Summing up his argument in favour of temple entry he holds that the Temple Entry Proclamation will not have served its purpose fully, unless it emphasises the following points: Firstly, the universality and catholicity of the Hindu faith, secondly, the necessity, as far as possible, for Hindus to hold to that faith unless and until a personal and irresistible call comes to them to embrace any other form of religion, be it Buddhism, Jainism, Christianity, Islam or Zoroastrianism; thirdly, the recognition that we have been ill-treating and placing wrongful disabilities on a great mass of the population of the country, and finally the devising of ways and means for the purpose of pulling these masses out of the slough of despondency, and securing them that redemption without which we ourselves shall never be redeemed. This work is not to be undertaken, because the Scheduled Castes are threatening reprisals unless they are guaranteed appointments under Government proportionate to their population and irrespectively of their present qualifications. That should not be the line of action. It has been asserted that blood will be shed unless a certain number of jobs are bestowed; such threats take us nowhere. But it must be granted that we have erred grievously, and one of the fundamental and inevitable results of the Temple Entry Proclamation is to make an acknowledgment and adequate atonement to those whom we have injured, whom we have slighted, whom we have kept down and ignored through many centuries.

In this connection he referred to the activities of other religions in relation to the depressed classes in India. He said: "What has been done by this State, what has been done by Hindu Rulers in the whole of India, has been to tolerate and allow everyone to preach and hold his faith. There has been no great religious persecution in India initiated by the followers of the Hindu faith after the Buddhistic period and, God willing, there will be none to the end of time. But it is not right or just on the part of any ecclesiastical dignitaries or personages to prevent other faiths from embarking on the same proselytising policy as they themselves follow. If theirs is a converting religion, ours by reaction will inevitably be a converting or rather a re-converting religion. If they will make conversion a personal and individual act arising from a personal message or inspiration, we shall not quarrel. But if they resort to mass conversions, Hindus will and must organise for mass re-conversions on the same basis and subject to the same conditions. I shall now conclude. We have met here to

commemorate a great historic and spiritual event. India is torn by warring factions political, social, economic, and religious. If anything sheds a ray of hope in the midst of the darkness, it is this beacon light of our faith extending to and embracing all the universe, granting succour and solace to every soul, in every state of evolution, denying no form of revelation and welcoming all modes of approach to the Divine. I am full of hope. There are discernible amidst all our quarrels the signs of a new spirit and uprush of the soul throughout this great land of ours."

The speech on *Post-War Reconstruction* is, as the Editor says, characteristic of Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar's boldness in pointing out the evils of over-accentuated Provincial Autonomy when All-India problems have to be faced squarely, and in putting forward an ardent plea for a unified Central Government able enough and strong enough to adopt measures embracing All-India problems. He gives illustrations. "Take the food problem in so far as it appertains to the part of the country from which I come. Travancore is at the very end of India and we are getting our food from the Persian Gulf—barley from the Persian Gulf, rice from Sind, rice and other grains from Bahawalpur, rice from Kashmere, millets from the United Provinces and a certain amount of foodstuff from Orissa. One would have thought that it would be possible for the Central Government to have so arranged matters both from the point of view of convenient transport and otherwise that Kashmere and Bahawalpur sent their surpluses to the United provinces, the United Provinces sent their surpluses to the Central Provinces, the Central Provinces to Madras and Madras to Travancore. That has not been done and, I think, that has not been done because there is not enough appreciation in the country at large, in the various provincial centres and amongst the people taken as a whole and even in the cases of Governments which are dealing with the matter, of the importance of co-ordinated activity....And I am saying it as a person who here represents an Indian State. At another place, the representative of a prominent Indian State expressed an apprehension that there might be some curtailment of the sovereignty and the integrity of the State administration if the Central Government took upon itself too meticulous and too sustained a control over such things as the supply of electrical power, irrigation and so forth. My answer then was, and my answer now will be, that in the urgent situation in which we are placed today, if an Indian State notwithstanding its heritage of sovereignty is going to be irreconcilable, is going to act not in consonance with but antagonistically to the welfare and the progress of India as a whole, that Indian State or those Indian States do not deserve to exist.

"This is true not only of Indian States but of Provinces also. I would without hesitation say that it is the part and lot and elementary duty of Indian States, and the part and lot of British India to work together, to reconcile themselves to the Central control in all All-India policies, apart from local and State policies and governance. Let there be representation of Indian States, if you please; let them have the fullest say as to the formulation of policy; let them have a chance of putting forward their views, but having done so let them agree to a Central control and Central laying down of the policy."

A. B.

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